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THE NEW YORKER

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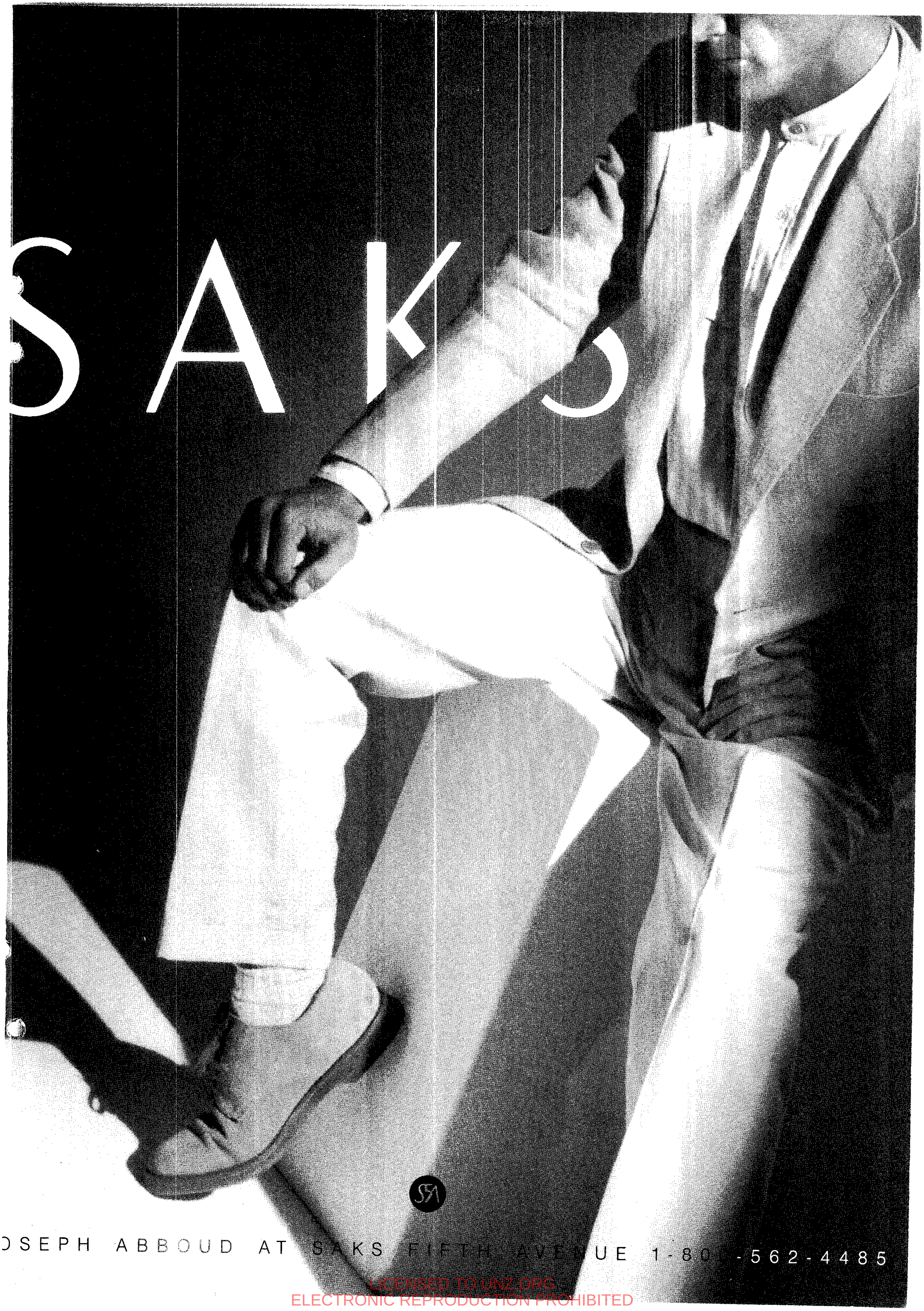
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Coal Mining, Dhanbad, Bihar, India, 1989
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COMMENT

THE WRONG PRESCRIPTION

HILLARY CLINTON'S report on what to do about doctors and their bills isn't due for another few weeks, but, reading the magazines and newspapers about the "health-care crisis," you get the impression that the real culprits have already been identified. It's those damn *patients*, with their incessant whining about their aches and pains, and their insistence on showing up at emergency rooms at all hours of the night, clamoring for help, who are really screwing things up. *Newsweek* recently devoted a couple of columns to this crisis, offering sorrowful tales of doctors forced to examine people who, it turned out, weren't even that sick. *The New Republic* suggested darkly this week that the only way to fix American medicine was to impose a strict "bare-bones" system (odd metaphor) on all those "middle-class" people, who presumably get operations for the fun of it.

Of course, overdoctoring *is* an American problem—one created mostly by the claims to omniscience that the medical guilds have been promoting for more than half a century. But the real reason for the current fantasy of doctor abuse by patients is simpler. Someone is going to have to do with less if American medicine is going to be fixed, and it will have to be either the patients or the "providers"—the insurance companies, the hospitals, and the doctors. Guess who's been talking to Mrs. Clinton's task force.

The biggest irony of American health care is that this is one of the very few "crises" in which there are—intellectually, at least—no hard choices. The pile of evidence that a "single-payer" system, in which the government serves as the insurance company—the Canadian system—works better than any other is by now so high that it is almost embarrassing to have to reassemble it here. The General Accounting Office has published a study that showed we could save sixty-seven billion dollars a year by adopting the Canadian system. That sum alone would come close to meeting the cost of covering the thirty-seven million uninsured Americans. Canada's medical expenditures are about nine per cent of its G.N.P., compared with ours,

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"I'll be frank—we offered it to Mario Cuomo first, but he turned it down."

which are about twelve per cent of the G.N.P., and in the two most crucial public-health indicators—life expectancy and infant mortality—Canada is ahead of us. As the *Times* noted recently, ninety-five per cent of Canadians report having received within twenty-four hours all the care they needed, and public support for the program remains at around ninety per cent. Nor is this a case where you sacrifice efficiency for social welfare. (Even in *Barron's*, Wall Street's trade paper, it has been conceded blandly this week that Canadian health-care costs are lower because a single-payer system is always more efficiently administered.) This is a case where you can have more, better, and cheaper, all at once. But it seems certain that we won't get a Canadian-style system. The real reasons for this failure are two—one political, the other intellectual. Taken together, they paint a depressing picture of political intimidation and ideological paralysis.

The political reason is obvious. The people who would benefit from a Canadian-style system, which is to say just about everybody, don't have concentrated political power. Those who would lose, which is to say the insurance companies, are unapologetically prepared to do whatever it takes to make sure that health insurance will remain their monopoly. They'll spend hundreds of millions of dollars of their clients' money on ad campaigns (that is, scare stories with slogans) and political contributions. The battle against them isn't winnable, and so isn't worth fighting.

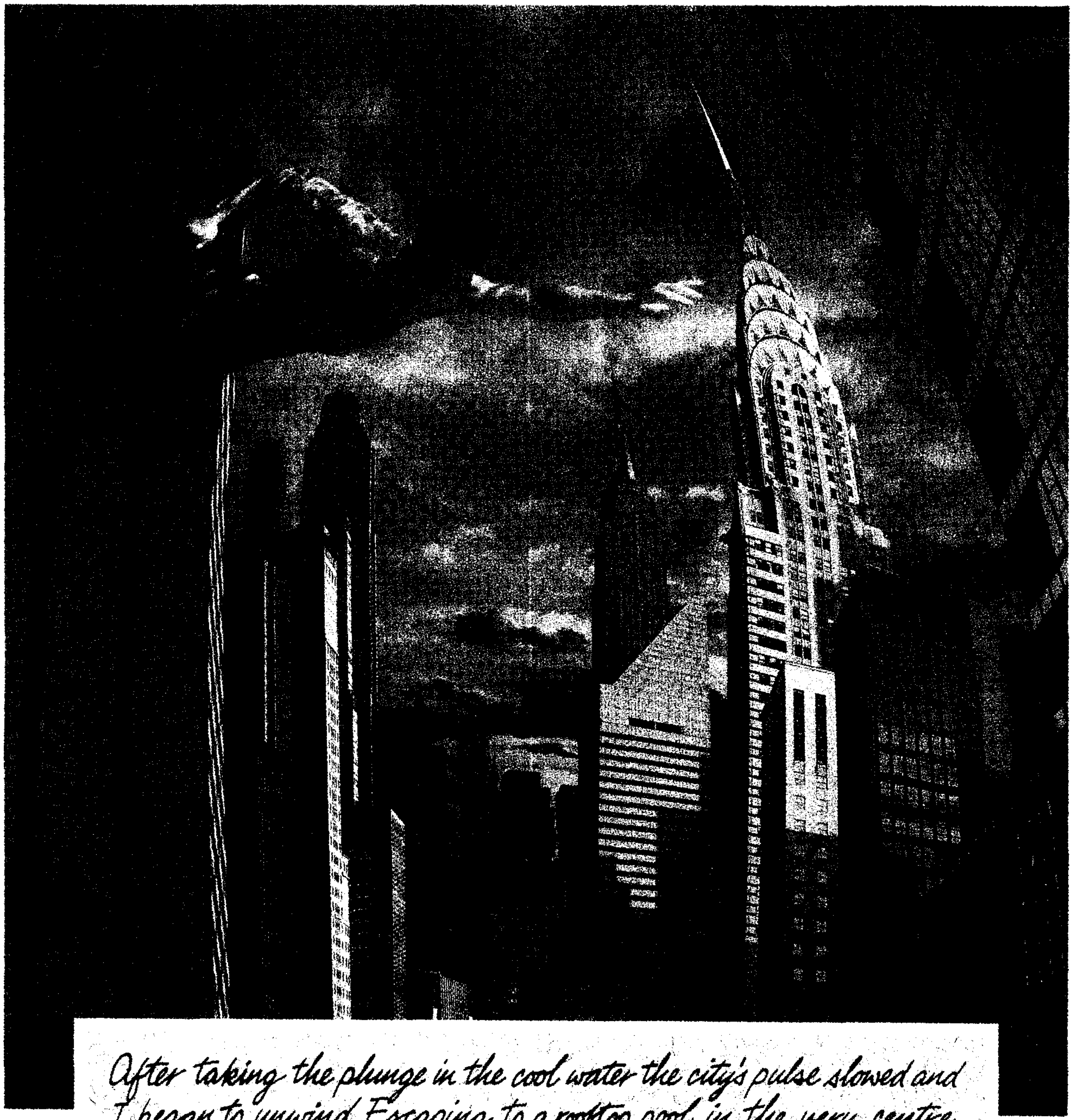
But there is also, even in enlightened circles, a conviction that "market competition" is such an unqualified good that there must be some way for its therapeutic virtues to be brought to bear on this problem. A lot of well-meaning thought on this subject is constricted by an ideological allergy—a kind of automatic intellectual response that idealizes the market system, and cuts off any pragmatic appreciation of what it does and does not do well.

Markets are terrific at creating goods and services, but they do it by distributing rewards according to price. People who have money get more of what's scarce than people who don't. Markets create winners and losers. That's their job. The secret of markets is that they manage to create so much of everything that a lot of the time the losers hardly know they've lost. It's not the gold medals that make capitalism endure. It's the consolation prizes.

But in the case of health care what the losers lose is their lives—or their well-being, or, at the very least, their peace of mind. To ask the market to fix this problem is to ask the market to do what it cannot possibly do: to create a system in which we all get just about the same amount of care—all the care we need. (We have come to accept that more money buys you more justice, but that is probably because relatively few of us ever have to buy justice. If each of us knew that around the age of seventy we would probably have to fight a capital case or two in court, we might feel differently about that system, too.)

What we seem likely to get from the Clinton task force is some version of "managed competition," a pseudo market system, which will probably institutionalize the insurance companies as the feudal lords of American medicine. Patients will be organized into big groups, in which they will most likely (in the case of the poor, quite certainly) have much less choice than they would have under a Canadian-style system. No one seriously expects that, given the quasi-monopoly that each organization will enjoy, there will be any serious price competition. When the Big Three ran the auto industry, they controlled prices very effectively, and no one imagines that compact health-care plans from Japan will ever penetrate (or even be allowed to enter) this market.

Watching the news these days, you notice a fearful symmetry between the entrenched Russian apparatchiks, who cannot understand, for the life of them, why if you simply give the command economy a kick here and there it will not be able to produce VCRs and minivans, and our entrenched apparatchiks, who cannot see why if you give the market a kick here and a jolt there it won't suddenly produce universal and equitable medical care. The two are the victims of the same syndrome—an insistence, born of ingrained ideological prejudice and the blindest kind of self-interest, on sticking to a system that long ago became too sick to cure. ♦



After taking the plunge in the cool water the city's pulse slowed and I began to unwind. Escaping to a rooftop pool in the very centre of New York was not what I had in mind when I had arrived. But the experience was one that could only be described to the uninitiated as swimming over Manhattan.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THE THEATRE

The Art of Noh

NOH drama is unique to Japan, where it has flourished since the fourteenth century. Most people here have a rough idea of what it is, but it is usually impossible to see these exquisite plays live without taking a long plane trip first. Now the Kanze Za, one of the five principal companies that have preserved Noh's traditions in Japan since the Middle Ages, is coming to America for the first time, to present three different programs, on April 22-24, in the Metropolitan Museum's Temple of Dendur. Each evening will include an introductory talk, two Noh plays, and one kyogen (farcical interlude).

These performances offer a chance to see theatre radically different from most Western concepts of drama. Noh is a rarefied, antirealistic combination of poetry, dance, music, and ritual, intended more to create a mood than to tell a story. There is the barest minimum of action, and few props are used. Music is provided by three drummers and a flutist. The performers' gestures and masks are stylized, and their costumes and wigs are elaborate. The dancing is elegant, and the poetry, hieratically chanted, achieves intensity through restraint.

More insight into Noh will be available at the museum when Columbia professor Donald Keene, whose enjoyable books and translations (of Noh plays, among many other things) have done so much to make Japanese literature accessible to English-speaking readers, lectures on the Japanese theatre, on April 21 (origins), April 24 (Noh), and April 28 (Kabuki and Bunraku).

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

And Baby Makes Seven—Cherry Jones, Peter Frechette, and Mary Mara head the cast of a play by Paula Vogel. Presented by Circle Rep. In previews. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

Angels in America—"Millennium Approaches," the first half of Tony Kushner's epic work, is in previews. (It has just been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for drama.) "Perestroika," the second half, will open in October and will run in repertory with "Millennium Approaches." (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Blood Brothers—Willy Russell's long-running London musical has crossed the Atlantic. Previews through April 24. Opens April 25 at 6. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The High Life—A concert version of the 1961 Dietz and Schwartz musical, which was formerly titled "The Gay Life." Different theatre professionals will make introductory remarks at each performance, including Barbara Cook, star of the original show, on April 24 at 8. (Mazur, Asphalt Green, 555 E. 90th St. April 23 at 8, April 24 at 3 and 8, and April 25 at 3. For information about tickets, call 971-8703.)

Kiss of the Spider Woman—A musical by John Kander (score), Fred Ebb (lyrics), and Terrence McNally (book). It is based on the 1976 Manuel Puig novel and stars Chita Rivera, Brent Carver, and Anthony Crivello. In previews. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Linda—The Ridiculous Theatrical Company's new show, by Everett Quinton and Mark Bennett, is billed as "a new country musical." In previews. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Sq. 691-2271.)

Lypsinka! A Day in the Life—John Epperson brings his fabulous lip-synching alter ego to Off Broadway. This show was seen last season at New York Theatre Workshop. In previews. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

Playboy of the West Indies—Mustapha Matura's 1984 adaptation of the J. M. Synge play. In previews. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Shakespeare for My Father—Lynn Redgrave's show about her relationship with her pater, the actor Michael Redgrave. Previews run through the April 24 matinée. Opens April 26 at 8. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.)

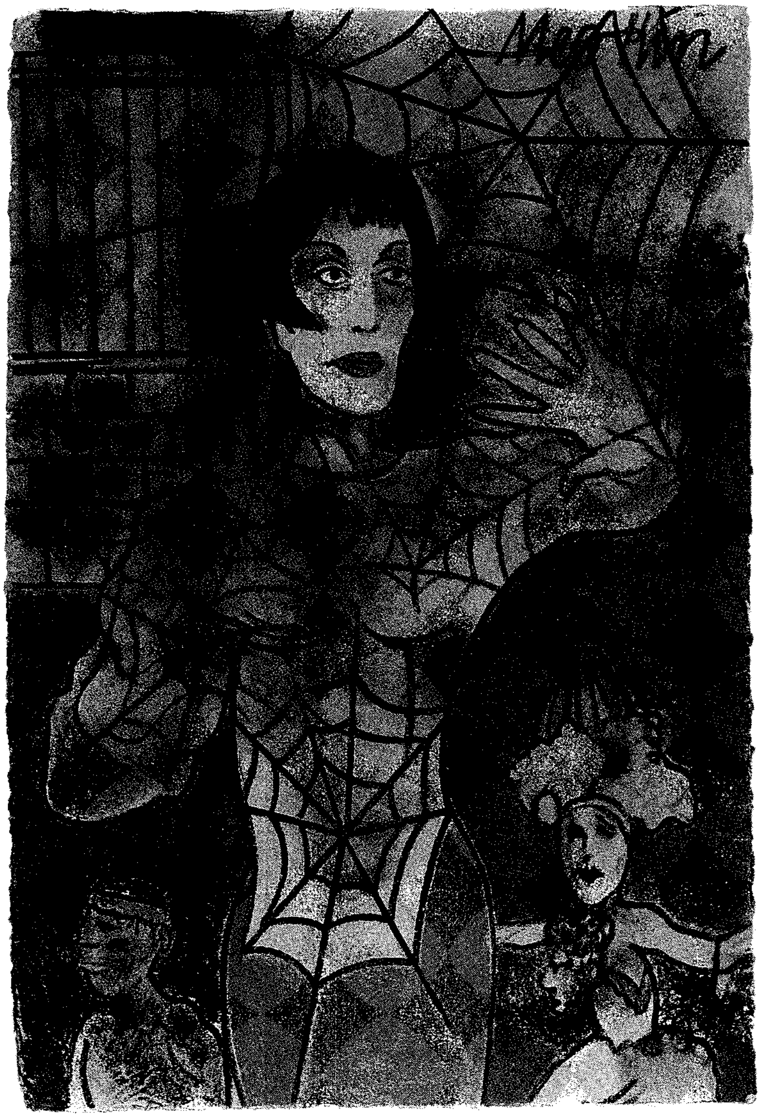
The Who's "Tommy"—The Pinball Wizard comes to Broadway. Pete Townshend and director Des McAnuff have adapted the classic rock opera for the stage. Two previews on April 21. Opens April 22 at 6:30. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

OPENED RECENTLY

Ain't Broadway Grand—Mike Burstyn portrays Mike Todd in this musical comedy. The score is by Mitch Leigh, the book is by Thomas Meehan and Lee Adams, and the lyrics are by Mr. Adams. Directed by Scott Harris. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

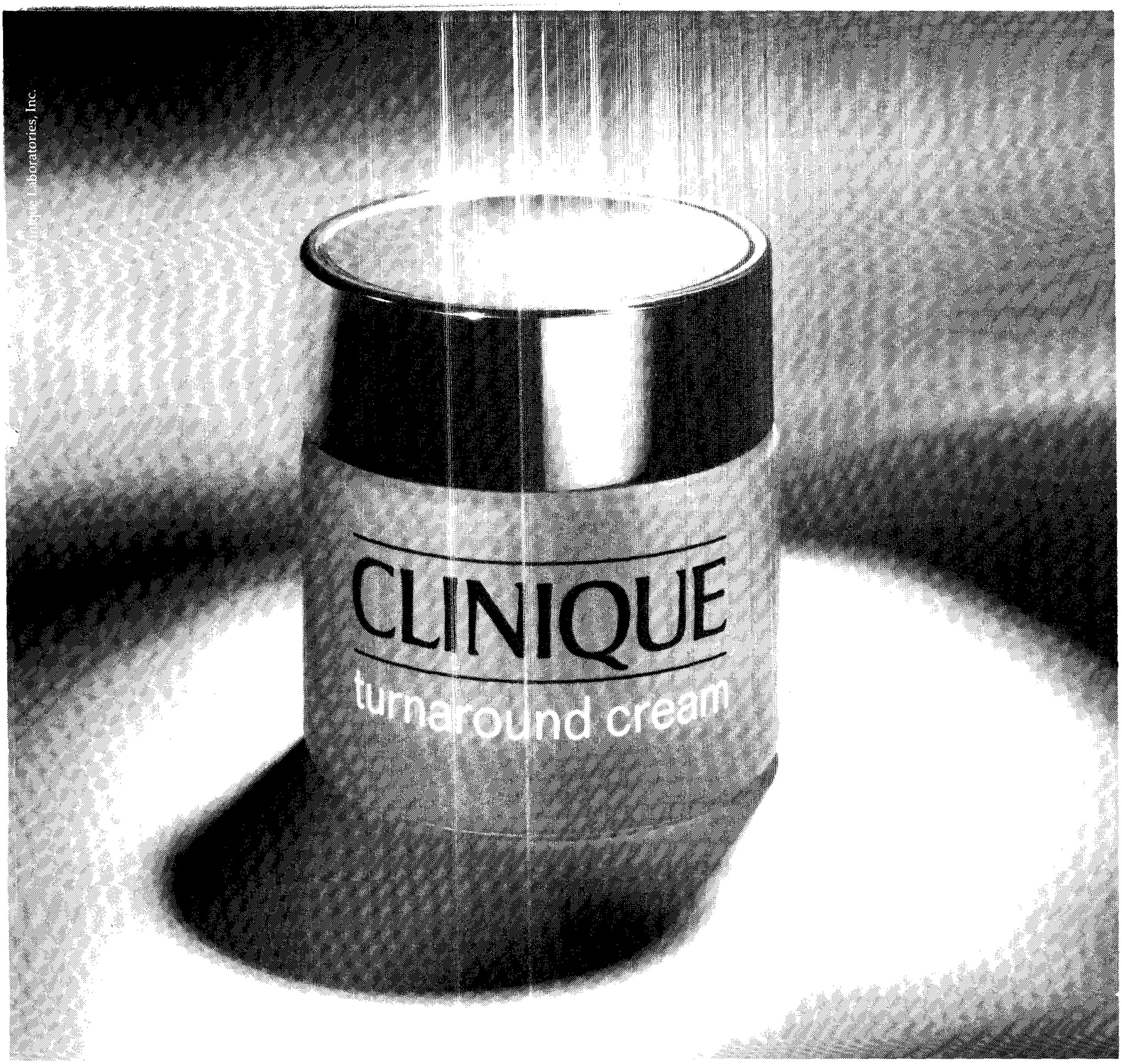
Another Time—Ronald Harwood's family drama presents a Jewish piano prodigy, at fifteen (in South Africa) and fifty-one (in London). The cast members—Malcolm McDowell (in a dual role as the young musician's father and as the musician himself in middle age), Joan Copeland, Marian Seldes, Michael Lombard, and James Waterston (as the teen-age prodigy)—are terrific, and occasionally manage to transform material that is hobbled by hackneyed language and cumbersome staging into something worth watching. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

Back to Bacharach and David—A fizzy, perfectly pitched new musical revue devoted to the songs Burt Bacharach and Hal David wrote in their prime. The singers are Melinda Gilb, Steve Gunderson, Sue Mosher, and Lillias White. Kathy Najimy directed. (Club 53, at the New York Hilton, Sixth Ave. at 53rd St. 261-5853.)



Chita Rivera in "Kiss of the Spider Woman."

RICHARD MERKIN



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THE THEATRE–Cont'd

Candida—The setting by David Jenkins, as lighted by Peter Kaczorowski, has great distinction, which is all that can be said for this production of Shaw's play. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/5/93.) (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400. Closes May 2.)

Deep in a Dream of You—A collection of twelve monologues by David Cale. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Closes April 25.)

Fool Moon—Bill Irwin and David Shiner are the inspired clowns in a show that is perfection itself. The only sound you'll hear is the merry music of the Red Clay Ramblers and the abundant laughter of the audience. (3/8/93) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

Forbidden Broadway 1993—Once again, a galaxy of parodies that sharpen into satire. (1/25/93) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

The Goodbye Girl—Bernadette Peters and Martin Short, two brilliant, funny stars, transform this otherwise indifferent musical adaptation of Neil Simon's movie into a sporadically festive evening. The dances by Graciela Daniele are more than helpful, as is the comic support by John Christopher Jones. Score by Marvin Hamlisch, lyrics by David Zippel. Michael Kidd directed. (3/15/93) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

Jeffrey—A comedy, by Paul Rudnick, about love in the age of AIDS; with John Michael Higgins. It is less a fleshed-out play than a series of Scenes from Gay Life, but Mr. Rudnick can quip with the best of them. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. 420-8000.)

Jenny Keeps Talking—In Richard Greenberg's one-woman show, Leslie Ayvazian plays, in succession, two sisters and their grandmother. Ms. Ayvazian does well in Act I, in which Jenny, a New York tabloid columnist, gets fired and copes by moving to a small town. But in Act II, playing the other sister and the grandmother, she lectures rather than acts, which leads one to believe that Mr. Greenberg, although he is funny from time to time, has almost nothing interesting to say about women, work, families, or love. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Closes May 2.)

Memory Tricks—Marga Gomez's one-woman show. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Closes May 2.)

Oleanna—David Mamet, in fine, curmudgeonly form, takes on political correctness, sexual harassment, and a number of other topics in this brief, powerful drama that continues to stir up the ideologues. The play's skepticism is as evenhanded as it is corrosive. Treat Williams and Mary McCann make up the cast. (11/16/92) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 307-4100.)

One Shoe Off—Jeffrey DeMunn, Daniel Gerroll, Mary Beth Hurt, Brian Kerwin, and Jennifer Tilly in a new play by Tina Howe. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

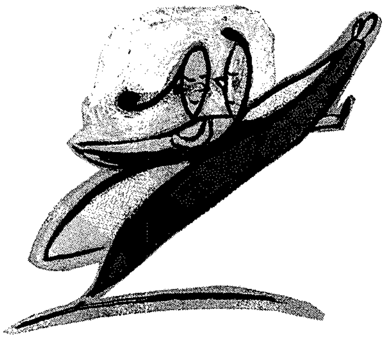
Owners and **Traps**—A pair of plays by Caryl Churchill that were written in the seventies, pre-"Cloud Nine." The first one is about a rapacious real estate dealer and her victims; the second is about two communes, one in the country, the other in a city, where an assortment of characters, living and dead, somehow manage to make do. The fierce, ironic sensibility of Ms. Churchill in both instances deftly adapts to comedy. The acting is fine throughout, especially that of J. Smith-Cameron, Robert Stanton, and Tim Hopper. Derek McLane designed the distinguished settings. The plays are performed in repertory. (4/19/93) (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 302-6989.)

Pretty Fire—Charlayne Woodard wrote and stars in this autobiographical one-woman show about being a black child in upstate New York in the sixties. Ms. Woodard is utterly believable in every role she's created, from her younger self to her grandmothers to a neighborhood fishmonger. Each word, incident, and gesture is well chosen, and the evening is a treat from beginning to end. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Closes April 29.)

Putting It Together—This celebration of Stephen Sondheim's music features Julie Andrews, Stephen Collins, Christopher Durang, Michael Rupert, and Rachel York. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Redwood Curtain—Vietnamese orphan piano prodigy meets Vietnam vet in woods. Good it is not. Marshall W. Mason directed Lanford Wilson's play. With Jeff Daniels and Sung Yun Cho. (4/12/93) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

The Sisters Rosensweig—Wendy Wasserstein's new play, a comedy with serious undertones, is about the reunion in London of three American Jewish sisters—an international banker, a travel writer, and a wife and mother who's a professional dispenser of advice. They are portrayed by Jane Alexander, Christine Estabrook, and Madeline Kahn. The spirit of Chekhov hovers but never intrudes. Laughter is continuous. (11/2/92) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)



Someone Who'll Watch Over Me—Michael York (English), Stephen Rea (Irish), and Chuck Cooper (American) portray hostages in Beirut in Frank McGuinness's moving and humorous play. Robin Lefèvre directed. (12/7/92) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Song of Jacob Zulu—Ladysmith Black Mambazo, a nine-man a-cappella group from South Africa, serves as the chorus in this new play by Tug Yourgrau. Jacob, compellingly played by K. Todd Freeman, is a righteous Christian teen-ager who gives up the hope of immortality in the next world for revolutionary immortality in this one. Unfortunately, the first song broadcasts the outcome of Jacob's fate, so the audience spends the rest of the evening biding its time; the show only really acquires oxygen and size in its all too few scenes with Ladysmith Black Mambazo. (4/12/93) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Three Hotels—A new play by Jon Robin Baitz, with Christine Lahti and Ron Rifkin. Joe Mantello directed. (Circle Repertory Company, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

Three Men on a Horse—Jack Klugman and Tony Randall star in the National Actors Theatre's revival of a comedy by John Cecil Holm and George Abbott. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6280.)

Wilder, Wilder, Wilder—Three one-acters by the invaluable Thornton—"The Long Christmas Dinner," "Pullman Car Hiawatha," and, best of all, "The Happy Journey to Trenton and Camden." The actors, though most of them are comparatively inexperienced, do a very good job, so the real star of the occasion is Edward Berkeley, the director. Seen recently at the McGinn/Cazale, the production has moved to Broadway. (12/21/92) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

Wrong Turn at Lungfish—The play owes more to day-in, day-out television than it does to the theatre, but it does at least serve as an occasion to present George C. Scott, as a grouchy, dying old professor. (3/8/93) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

LONG RUNS

CATS: Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **FALSETTOS:** Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FIVE GUYS NAMED MOE:** Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **GUYS AND DOLLS:** Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **JELLY'S LAST JAM:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.

DANCE

Misha and Mr. B

HELL takes many forms. This one, for instance: You're a dance fan, and you live in New York in the spring of 1993, a time when so much is going on that just reading the performance schedules makes you crazed. And at the moment you only have disposable income enough for tickets to two events. Oh, the humanity!

Predictions of bliss in dancing are often a gamble. Here, however, are two possible bets. For modern dance, try one of the performances that the Mark Morris Dance Group, in tandem with members of Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project, is presenting at the Brooklyn Academy of Music on April 29-30 and May 1-2. The program, choreographed by Mr. Morris, features two world premières, the New York première of "Grand Duo" (from which last season's explosive "Polka" was drawn) and Mr. Morris and Mr. Baryshnikov dancing, on alternate evenings, in the solo "Three Preludes."

From the Balanchine Celebration, presented by the New York City Ballet at the New York State Theatre, try one of the performances containing "Symphonie Concertante" (May 8-9), newly restaged by Susan Pilarre. This delicate classical ballet, with music by Mozart, is being danced by some of the finest students at the School of American Ballet. Weeks of rehearsal have been devoted to it, and several members of the original cast have come in to help fine-tune it, among them the two original ballerinas, Maria Tallchief and Tanaquil Le Clercq.

New York City Ballet—The spring season offers "The Sleeping Beauty" (through May 2) and then continues with the Balanchine Celebration (from May 4 through June 27). (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. April 22-23 and April 27 at 8, April 24 at 2 and 8, and April 25 at 1 and 7.)

Trisha Brown Dance Company—Opening performance of a two-week engagement that will run through May 9: "Set and Reset," "Foray Forêt," and "Another Story as in Falling" (company première). (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. April 27 at 7:30.)

Maria Benitez Teatro Flamenco—In "El Muro," plus traditional flamenco. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. April 21-24 and April 27 at 8, and April 25 at 2 and 7:30. Through May 2.)

Battery Dance Company—In a program of four premières and a revival. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. April 22 at 7:30 and April 23-24 at 8.)

Cyndi Lee Dance Company—In a program including "Beat," performed to songs written and read by Allen Ginsberg. (14th Street Dance-Center, 344 E. 14th St. April 24 at 8 and April 25 at 3. For reservations, call 745-8217.)

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Fun-Da-Mental at Thread Waxing Space.

DAVID MAZZUCCHELLI

NIGHT LIFE

Polyglot Posse

HIP-HOP is proving to be an infinitely malleable genre, able to accommodate everything from jazz to folk to Michael Stipe. Fun-Da-Mental, a London group making its American début at Thread Waxing Space on April 23-24, has come up with a new combination: raga and rhetoric. The beat is urban American, the melodies and instrumentation are Indian and Middle Eastern, and the rapping is inspired by the teachings of Malcolm X, Gandhi, and Louis Farrakhan. Fun-Da-Mental consists of two Pakistanis, an Indian, and a Jamaican, all of whom grew up in England. There's Bad-Sha Lallaman, the lead rapper, who toasts, Jamaican-style, in English and Punjabi; Goldfinger Man-Tharoo, the percussionist; Propa-Gandhi, who handles the sampling; and DJ Blacka-D.

The group's strident lyrics and blustering pronouncements have, inevitably, earned them the high-concept nickname "the Asian Public Enemy." One cut off their recent EP, "Peace Love or War," begins with a sampled Farrakhan warning that the Europeans are trying to "carve up Africa"; another starts off with Malcolm X declaring, "If someone puts his hand on you, send him to the cemetery." Whatever your response to these agitprop trappings may be, the music has a universal appeal. The group starts with a muscular rhythm track and adds layers of tabla drums, chanting, and snake-charming melodies. It's up-to-the-minute music for the club or the bazaar.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out some of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Making her Oak Room début, **WESLIA WHITFIELD** is the most assured and affecting jazz-cabaret singer to arrive in New York in many years. She can belt like Frankie Laine, and then in the next measure hold a soft, simmering Peggy Lee long note. Whitfield's repertoire includes Berlin, the Gershwins, Dietz and Schwartz, and Ray Noble; her late show on Fridays and Saturdays is called "Strictly Standards." She's here through April 24. Dining.

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—Some bars cater to a specific clientele, but Arthur's is a free-for-all. It's a small, strange Village bar that looks like a pack rat's attic. In the back is a small, bar-encircled stage, where one can usually find patrons listening to, cheering on, and joining in with the musicians. Saturdays belong to Mabel Godwin, Sundays to Lee Lorenz and his band.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek, green-walled room with brass railings and mounted O'Keeffian animal skulls. Look closer and you'll find that the skulls are wearing earrings. After the show, be sure to check out the adjoining restaurant/tapas bar, which looks like the indoor food market of your dreams. The **FUNNY GAY MALES** are here through April 25. This trio of performers plies gay humor as a privileged vantage point for skewering any and all romance and folly. No translating, no dwelling on wounds, and no slogans. Danny McWilliams has a campy mouth and a self-satirizing extravagance, Bob Smith hits bull's-eyes with his deadpan lines, and Jaffe Cohen has perfected an echt-nerd persona. After forming the ensemble in 1988, they weathered hecklers and bashers, and, thankfully, stuck with one another.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Once you get past the rough bits here—the hordes of tourists, the cattle-car seating, the stiff prices—you're likely to find yourself face to face with some of the biggest names in jazz. The **LYLE MAYS** quartet and the **GARY BURTON** quartet, featuring Makoto Ozone, appear through April 25. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—This big, airy folk-and-rock club tends to be the site of a lot of music-industry bashes. If you have trouble getting tickets to the early show, it's usually because some record company has bought the place out. The later shows, though they're not as well attended and though they tend to run late, are much looser in spirit. Scraggly knight and philanthropist and former Boomtown Rat **BOB GELDOF** and his new band, the Happy Clubsters, perform on April 23. **DARLENE LOVE** is here on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is home, through April 24, to **DIXIE CARTER.** Her performance is less about singing than it is about dramatic interpretation. You'll be touched by her charm, buoyed by her energy, and you'll hear every word. She tells funny between-song stories about life in McLemoresville, Tennessee, her hometown, and sings a mock-drunken cover of the Fifth Dimension's "Sweet Blindness," during which she sprawls on the piano. Most of the show is completely over the top, but then she surprises you with a perfect reading of Dylan's "Don't Think Twice, It's All Right," transforming its raspy farewell into a soulful torch adieu. It's worth the price of admission. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The city's most famed rock club—a dark, narrow cave with neon-beer-sign stalactites and ancestral graffiti—is part sacred burial ground and part historic landmark, but it hasn't succumbed to nostalgia: new and used bands of every stripe continue to burn brightly here. **BETTIE SERVEERT** performs on April 22. Also, Southern Culture on the Skids and Mule, April 23; Hell's Kitchen, April 24; and Tom Cora, April 25.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—A softly lit, low-ceilinged, roughly Manhattan-shaped jazz preserve. Pianist **AHMAD JAMAL** holds forth through April 25. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Dining.

Five Spot, 4 W. 31st St. (631-0100)—The latest entrant in the jazz-club sweepstakes. The **SHIRLEY HORN** trio is here through April 25. A master of rich minimalism, singer-pianist Horn is not prone to vocal histrionics or keyboard noodlings. Her style is subtle, yet this intense Washington, D.C., native can accomplish things with her whisper-thin voice and artful phrasing that most pop divas can only dream of. Her last two albums—"You Won't Forget Me" and "Here's to Life"—were both best-sellers. However, her true métier is performing on a night-club stage. There, backed by bassist Charles Ables and percussionist Steve Williams, Horn can take the audience's pulse and adjust accordingly. It's invention on the fly, straight to the heart of jazz. Dining.

Grand, 76 E. 13th St. (777-0600)—The former home of the gone and forgotten Cat Club. The new owners have given the space a much needed facelift—more bars, a paint job, a new stage, and a thumping sound system. Only the velvet rope out front remains. April 21: Cop Shoot Cop, with Motherhead Bug. April 24: **COWS,** with Janitor Joe.

J's, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—A jazz room, one steep flight up from the Upper West Side hurly-burly. On April 23, the **JUDY BARNETT** quartet takes the stage. The **REBECCA PARRIS** quartet is here on April 24. **CAROL BRITTO** and **MICHAEL MOORE** are in for a night on April 26. Dining.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—The club most likely to feature an electric-rake player. April 22:

a Mingus Birthday Tribute, with **DON BYRON, RASHIED ALI, RAVI COLTRANE,** and others. April 23-24: a Sun Ra benefit, with **ANDREW CYRILLE** and Sun Ra's **ARKESTRA.**

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—The bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. April 22: Southern Culture on the Skids and Wig Hat. April 23: **BETTIE SERVEERT,** Severin, and Flophouse. April 24: **YO LA TENGO** and Secret Passage.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—The main dining room strives for the appearance of a British pub but looks more like a good old American family restaurant. Still, there's a real nice red telephone booth when you walk in the door. **NANCY MARANO** and **EDDIE MONTEIRO** are in for an open-ended run. She sings and he accompanies with his voice and accordion—two voices intertwined with a sixty-four-piece orchestra. There is no more lyrical, subtle, and exhilarating jazz-cabaret group than this New York duo. Closed Sundays.

Paddy Reilly's Music Bar, 495 Second Ave., at 28th St. (686-1210)—This Irish outpost has become known as the birthplace of the roots-and-rebellion rock band Black 47, which acknowledged its paternity by putting a picture of the joint on the cover of its new album, "Fire of Freedom." The influx of new heat-seeking customers has left the place generally unchanged. As soon as the tables and chairs are cleared, the patrons raise their glasses and stomp their feet as if they're dancing in Billy Brennan's barn. Prepare for packed crowds, flowing Guinness, and an Irish-hootenanny atmosphere. **BLACK 47** usually plays on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and Speir Mor (Gaelic for "Big Sky") performs for a hearty following on Fridays. Séisiún—a traditional Irish jam—is on Thursday nights and features players of the fiddle, the tin whistle, and the bodhrán. The other regular bands are the Kips Bay Ceili Band, the Rogues, and Eileen Ivers & Seamus Egan. When there is no live music, the jukebox blasts everything from the Chieftains to Greg Trooper to Paddy Reilly, the Irish folksinger who owns the bar.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A moondust-in-your-hair cabaret where a club soda costs, well, a *lot.* **KAREN AKERS** is currently in residence. Closed Mondays.

Ritz, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—One of the city's biggest, oldest, and loudest rock clubs. The club features a broad stage, mobile-home-size speakers, plenty of room to shimmy, and, for the sedentary, a giant Big Brother video screen. On April 23, Danielle Mercury will perform. The late show that same night is **GEORGE CLINTON AND THE P-FUNK ALL STARS.** The greatest of the seventies black supergroups, this band crossed over all musical boundaries. Although the group recorded as Parliament, and also as Funkadelic, it was really a single entity that became known as Parliament/Funkadelic—a name in limbo due to record-company litigation. They incorporated Hendrix-style psychedelia, James Brown's rhythm, and Sly Stone's innovations in soul-music arrangement, and added a lyrically loopy, danceable world view dubbed P-Funk. Led by the brilliant George Clinton—a deranged Ellington—the group produced several amazing concept albums, among them "Motor-Booty Affair" and "Funkentelechy vs. the Placebo Syndrome." Much of this classic work appears on the superb upcoming two-CD set "Tear the Roof Off (1974-1980)." As wonderful as the albums are, they are merely a primer for P-Funk live. Expect a fierce, slammin' experience.

Russian Tea Room, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—Upstairs, there's a small, red-gold-and-green cabaret. **JO SULLIVAN LOESSER** is in on April 25. Dining.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—The closest thing in Manhattan to a rain forest. April 25: Algerian Night, with **DJAMAL ALLAM.** Dining.

Supper Club, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—Upstairs at this gilt-railinged, lamé-curtained club is a plush little nook called the Blue Room, which boasts celestial-motif wallpaper and a profusion of deep-sea blue. The racket of midtown can't find you here. **ROSLYN KIND** performs April 22-24.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A pretty serious jazz night club where you have to pass within inches of the stage to reach the rest rooms. The **RON CARTER** quintet works through April 25. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Dining.

Tavern on the Green, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—In the heart of the heart of this legendary indoor-outdoor eatery is one of Manhattan's newer jazz spots, the Chestnut Room. The **ROLAND HANNA** trio is in action April 22-23 and April 25.

Thread Waxing Space, 476 Broadway (966-9520)—This downtown art gallery doubles as a music-performance space with an ahead-of-the-curve booking policy. **FUN-DA-MENTAL** is here on April 23-24.

Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—Hidden within this sleek and trendy restaurant is a two-story club called Fez. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** packs them in every Thursday. The fourteen-piece ensemble, directed by saxophonists Craig Handy and Alex Foster, concentrates exclusively on the tricky, cacophonous work of its catalyst, Charles Mingus, whose birthday is April 22. Dining.

Tramps, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Thanks to low lighting, muralled pillars, ironwork, and a beautifully restored old tin ceiling, this loft space manages to feel homey. Zydeco, soul, blues, and rock are the main orders of business here. April 22: **MERL SAUNDERS & THE RAINFOREST BAND** and **CHOOSY MOTHERS.** April 23: **BOB TELSON AND LITTLE VILLAGE.** Telson is a New York keyboard player, accordionist, and composer whose works have been heard in films ("Bagdad Café" and "Salmonberries") and on stage in Twyla Tharp's "Sextet" and at BAM's Next Wave festival. With his band, Little Village, he plays scintillating world music and creates wonderful cabaret atmospherics. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The holiest of jazz shrines. **KENNY BARRON'S** trio works out with special guest **GARY BARTZ** through April 25. Mondays are reserved for the **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA.**

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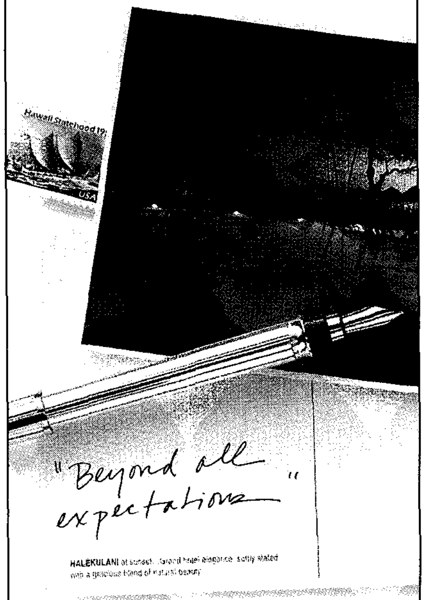
Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus—A great big gaudy spectacular. (Madison Square Garden. Through May 2. For information about show times and tickets, call 465-6000.)

Cirque du Soleil—This intimate one-ring circus from Montreal is offering a new show, "Saltimbanco," which has beautifully costumed performers and lots of choreographed elegance. (The blue-and-yellow tent at Battery Park City. For information about show times and tickets, call 809-6969.)

"Bitch! Dyke! Faghag! Whore!"—Penny Arcade presides over a foxy gang of male and female erotic dancers and the most heterogeneous audiences this side of Jones Beach, and she tells her own coming-of-age story with bawdy humor and sisterly warmth. There's nudity and bad language—and that title, of course—but it's all dazzlingly benign. (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120. Thursdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7.)

"The Strange Life of Ivan Osokin"—An opera-in-progress by director Lawrence Sacharow, librettist Constance Congdon, and composer Peter Gordon. With five singers, a children's chorus, and Mr. Gordon's Love of Life Orchestra Quartet. (St. Ann's Church, 157 Montague St., Brooklyn. 1-718 858-2424. April 24 at 8 and April 25 at 4.)

WaterWorks—A local company of aquatic dancers performs five new pieces. (Manhattan Plaza Health Club, 482 W. 43rd St. April 23 at 9 and April 24-25 at 8. Tickets at the door on the nights of the performances.)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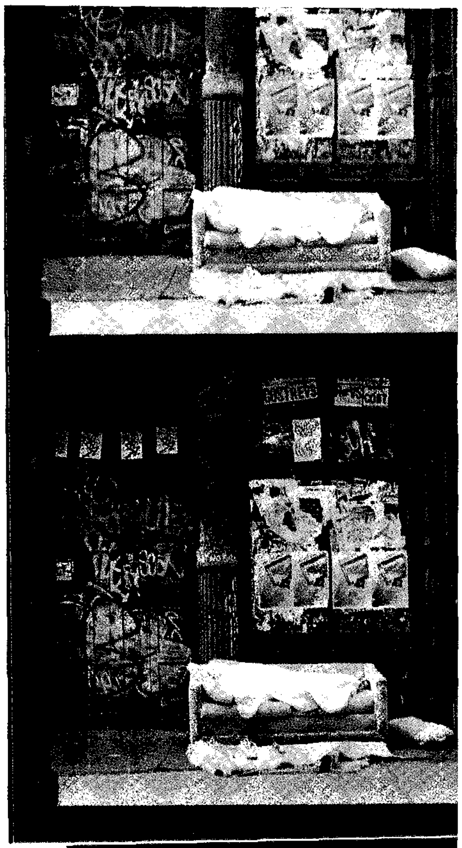

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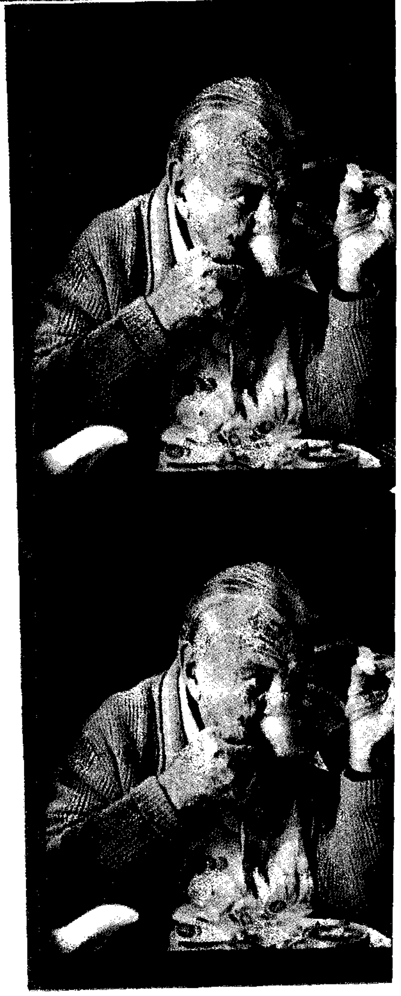

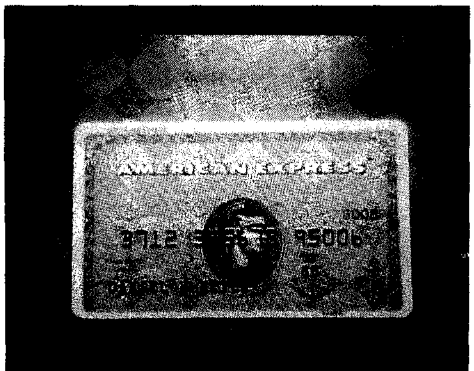

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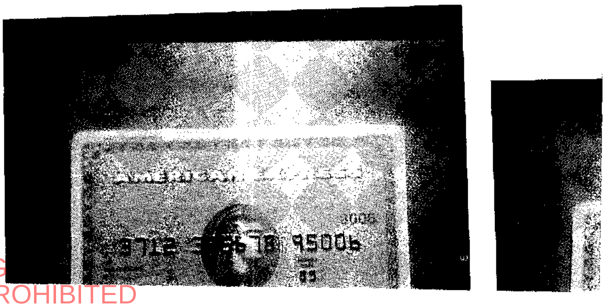

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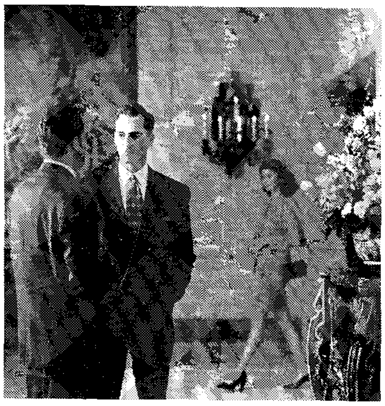

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ART

Last Spring

JOAN MITCHELL'S final paintings (at Robert Miller, 41 East 57th Street; through May 8) convey the ferocious vigor of a teen-age bacchante. Her characteristic stabbing, swooping, skittering brushwork is as animated as it ever was in these nine works, all from 1992. Their startling optical clarity, due in part to the artist's deep understanding of yellow—she taps into its biliousness and coldness, not just its warmth—suggests the hard sunlight of early spring, as well as the twilight of the soul.

Mitchell, who died in Paris on October 30, at the age of sixty-six, finished these paintings during the earlier part of the year, evidently in a kind of vernal thrall. She painted them in Vétheuil, a small town deep in Monet country (though she despised those who drew the obvious comparison). She had bought a house and some property there in 1967, with money from a trust set up by her grandfather, a prominent engineer. Mitchell was a Chicago girl from a good family, as she never tired of pointing out. She also never failed, however, to remind people that she had attended Francis Parker, an academically rigorous rather than a merely posh school that had many high-powered scholarship students. The artist took particular delight in her youthful acquaintance with a certain Nancy Davis, the doting stepdaughter of a Chicago society surgeon, who would later become the lady-in-red of the Reagan White House. Mitchell was no Republican. She was undoubtedly obnoxious. She was a conversational wrangler of lunatic proportion, a cranky old baby. But paintings like these should insure her a long and radiant afterlife. (A documentary about the artist, "Joan Mitchell: Portrait of an Abstract Painter," is being shown at Film Forum, 209 West Houston Street; through April 27.)

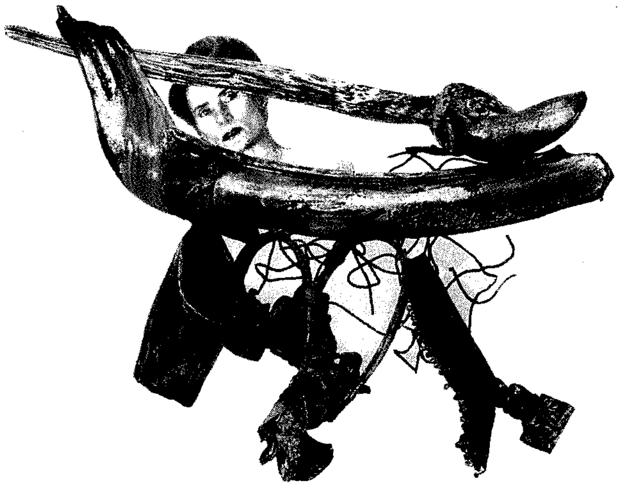
MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Daumier Drawings" is the first major exhibition devoted specifically to the drawings of Honoré Daumier (1808-79). Daumier was a working artist in the modern sense, a lithographer by trade and a savage pictorial satirist whose lampoons of King Louis Philippe once landed him in jail. The show contains more than a hundred of his caustic masterpieces, including "The Drunkenness of Silenus," "The Legislative Belly," and the saturnine "Doctor Prunelle." Through May 2. . . . ¶ "The Greek Miracle: Classical Sculpture from the Dawn of Democracy, the Fifth Century B.C." Forty-three statues, stelae, busts, and figures from the fifth century B.C., including such archetypal works as the "Kritios Boy." Through May 23. . . . ¶ Paintings from fifteenth-century China, in "Painters of the Great Ming: The Imperial Court and Zhe School." Through May 2. . . . ¶ "Splendid Legacy: The Havemeyer Collection." More than four hundred and fifty works—Islamic pottery, Tiffany Favrile glass, Manets, Monets, Degases, et cetera—from the Havemeyer family's modest agglomeration. . . . ¶ "The Waking Dream: Photography's First Century" features rare prints from 1839 to 1939. . . . ¶ The New Costume Institute's first show, "Infra-Apparel," puts into perspective the phenomenon—not at all confined to the present day—of underwear worn as outerwear. This show ranges from a white American Empire-style day dress (circa 1799)—which would make the wearer look to us like chastity incarnate but to Victorians as if she had just got out of bed—to the gold-sprayed satin corset worn by Madonna in her "Like a Virgin" video. In between are designs by Balenciaga, Fortuny, Lagerfeld, Versace, you name it. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Max Ernst: Dada and the Dawn of Surrealism" comprises two hundred and thirty paintings, relief sculptures, collages, drawings, and prints. Through May 2. . . . ¶ "Thinking Is Form: The Drawings of Joseph Beuys." Beuys' most visually arresting, graphically self-contained works tend to be called "Untitled," while the more humdrum, pictorially helpless pieces tend to have elaborate titles, as if to justify them ("From the Intelligence of Swans," "Eurasian Staff Against a Clandestine American Alliance for Aims of Political Power"). "Untitled" (1955), one of the few drawings here in which color, in the usual sense, plays a role, is a kind of dusky, depressed Marin landscape, hovering on the borderline between abstraction and representation. "Untitled" (1963) is a simple, distilled Albers-like composition—a rectangle of folded bright-red tissue paper above a square of rough brown wrapping paper—which would attract attention from fifty yards away. The most beautiful work in the show is "Untitled" (1957), a densely entropic concentration of marks made with pen-and-ink, machine oil, flame, and *Beize* (etching acid), grounded by an angry, light-devouring zone of black electrician's tape. The piece is an instance of a kind of neurological Fauvism that has got hold of any number of artists since mid-century, an exaltation of the materials of art and of the exact nervous forces at work in the artist as he or she employs them. Beuys was one of the first. Through May 2. . . . ¶ "Thresholds/Santiago Calatrava: Structure and Expression." Calatrava's drawings and scale models seem at once organic and futuristic. Among the architect's projects documented here are viaducts, bridges, and railway stations realized throughout Europe; the Spanish pavilion from last year's World's Fair, in Seville; and the model for a "biospheric" addition to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Through May 18. . . . ¶ Photomontages by Dadaist John Heartfield and photographs by Philip-Lorca diCorcia. . . . ¶ "Projects: Readymade Identities." For a few hair-raising seconds, you think you've stumbled where you don't belong—and, essentially, you have—when you enter Sonia Balassanian's "The Other Side, II," an intelligent, satisfying, and unsettlingly resonant installation made with the simplest of materials—mannequins, fabric, floodlights, and mirrors. It's like turning the corner into the headlights of an oncoming subway train. Through May 18. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Picasso and the Age of Iron" contains more than ninety works, by Picasso, Alexander Calder, Alberto Giacometti, Julio González, and David Smith. Sculpted iron, bronze, brass, and steel seem particularly suited to the austerity of the Guggenheim. As you wind along the ramp toward the summit, past Smith's arc-welded abstractions, González's woven rods and ribbons, and Calder's fragile mobiles, you find such masterworks as Picasso's Cyclopean "Head" (1964) and Giacometti's delicate, life-size "Capsizing Man" (1950). Through May 16. (Open daily, except Thursdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway—"Four Rooms and a House Ball: Pop and the Everyday Object." A small show of classic Pop-art paintings: Robert Rauschenberg's "Canyon," Jasper Johns' "Flag," Roy Lichtenstein's "Kiss V," Andy Warhol's "Orange Disaster," and Jim Dine's "Four Rooms." Also included is a gargantuan ball bound with household objects, which Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen made as a prop for "Il Corso del Coltello," a performance they staged in Venice, in 1985, in collaboration with the architect Frank Gehry. Through April 25. . . . ¶ "Photography in Contemporary German Art: 1960 to the Present." Through May 9. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday through Saturday evenings until 10.)



Nancy Graves at Knoedler gallery.

STEPHEN DANA

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—Like one of those Russian *matrioshki*, this Biennial, boasting the work of more than eighty American artists, is a show within a show within a show. You could spend days here if you were diligent about combing all the installations, reading all the texts, and watching all the videos—much of the material evincing a concern for sociopolitical issues. Better to go with the flow and not ask whither. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"Manet to Picasso" features prints and drawings from the museum's permanent collection. Through May 23. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Amazon Portrait." Photographs of the Tapirapé Indians of central Brazil. Through May 9. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—"Glass Installations" features work by six premier glass artists. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—"Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation, 1965-85." More than a hundred mural images, historical photographs, and archival documents. Through May 2. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—A well-meaning documentarist once asked Louise Nevelson what it was about Cubism that had attracted her to it, and she replied, "The cubes." The designers represented in "Czech Cubism: Architecture and Design" were craftsmen after her own heart, for they, too, obviously had actual cubes in mind as the basis for their design experiments. Vlastislav Hofman's side chair and armchair (both 1911-12) patently represent straightforward subtractions from the cube, as, with somewhat more complex geometry, does Antonín Procházka's stool (1919). The vases by Hofman (1911) and Josef Havlíček (ca. 1920) are just as clearly based on the principle of addition to the cube (or, in the latter case, stack of cubes). (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"A Great Legacy: Morgan Collections, 1913-43" presents J. P. Morgan, Jr.,'s distinguished acquisitions, including Medieval and Renaissance manuscripts; Gutenberg and Caxton incunabula; autograph letters by Austen, Locke, and Balzac; Rembrandt prints; and much more. . . . ¶ According to T. S. Eliot, "Henry James had a mind so fine that no idea could violate it." "The Observant Eye" explores that mind with an exhibition of original manuscripts, letters, and first editions celebrating the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of James's birth. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Assault on the Arts: Culture and Politics in Nazi Germany." Through May 28. . . . ¶ "Christian Boltanski: Books, Prints, Printed Matter, Ephemera." Through May 15. (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 5:45; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5:45.)

Queens Museum of Art, Flushing Meadow Park—Ten works by Keith Haring: eight drawings, one sculpture, and a sixty-foot mural. . . . ¶ Twelve large photo prints and four installation works by photographer Barbara Ess. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Nancy Graves—New sculptures comprising fused agglomerations of found objects and beach-walk booty, many with shimmering patinas, that aspire to a high-minded frivolousness. Graves is a daring artist—in the bedazzling and projectile manner of a Frank Stella—even when her thinking seems distracted. Through May 6. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

"Directors' Drawings"—A lively show of fourteen film directors' drawings, juxtaposed with the footage they gave rise to. Martin Scorsese's drawings are storyboards for scenes he envisioned so precisely that virtually every shot and cut was established before the cameras began to roll. David Lynch's drawings are more allusive and atmospheric. Satyajit Ray proves himself a fine draftsman, others prove themselves at best serviceable, but film fans will likely find all the material fascinating. The clip from Fellini's "City of Women" in which Marcello Mastroianni wanders down a corridor that's full of pictures of his female conquests, displayed as in a gallery, is wonderful. Through April 24. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

"The 'Outsider' Question"—This show sets out to explore the range of art produced in this century by self-taught artists—the so-called primitives, the "psychologically challenged," and folk artists. Camille Bombois and Grandma Moses, the most well-known artists represented, are the least interesting. The heart of the show is work by artists who seem compelled to depict some inescapable interior world—for instance, Martin Ramirez and his drawings of cowboys, made while he was in a mental institution. Also first-rate are Joseph Yoakum's oddly idyllic landscapes and Henry Darger's fantasies of "Glandelinian" girls enslaving the naked "Vivian Girls" in a cold, snowy landscape. Through May 8. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

From left to right: Kanga-tobacco ostrich "Bugatti" PM bag, $7,325; red courchevel calfskin "Plume" 45 cm bag, $3,695; natural pigskin "Ile de Shiki" bag, $3,175; Hermès shirt, $1.425.

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ART–Cont'd

Short List—**PIERRE ALECHINSKY:** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. Through April 24. . . . **DENNIS ASHBAUGH:** Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St. Through April 24. . . . **FRANCIS BACON:** Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Through April 27. (Open Mondays). . . . **NELL BLAINE:** Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. Through May 1. . . . **NAYLAND BLAKE** and **RONI HORN:** Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. Through April 24. . . . **FRITZ BULTMAN:** Schlesinger, 24 E. 73rd St. Through May 15. . . . **CHARLES BURCHFIELD:** Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St. Through May 15. . . . **MICHAEL BYRON:** Baron-Boisanté, 50 W. 57th St. Through May 8. . . . **RALSTON CRAWFORD:** Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. Through April 24. . . . **STUART DAVIS:** Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. Through May 1. (Open Mondays). . . . **WILLEM DE KOONING:** C&M Arts, 45 E. 78th St. Through April 24. . . . **GWEN JOHN:** Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. Through May 28. . . . **ROBERT LA HOTAN:** Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through May 1. . . . **JAN MÜLLER** and **BOB THOMPSON:** Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St. Through May 29. . . . **MATTHEW RADFORD:** Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through May 15. . . . **THOMAS SCHÜTTE:** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Through April 24. (Open Mondays). . . . **PAVEL TCHELITCHEW:** Rosenfeld, 50 W. 57th St. Through May 29. . . . **ROBIN UTTERBACK:** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. Through April 29. . . . **DAISY YOUNGBLOOD:** McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through May 8.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Jonathan Borofsky—In these sculptures and drawings, Borofsky is apparently trying to recapture some of the magical stream of consciousness of his best early shows, at the beginning of the eighties. But while his facile hand could once dance, the results now seem labored. This show certainly has its resounding moments—a series of snapshot pairings of Hitler and himself, Hitler's mom and his, Hitler's drawings and his—but an accompanying wall drawing, with the meaningless truism "Both the fascist and the idealist search for perfection" written over and over on it, like punishment, is heavy-handed. The artist has also stretched lengths of twine, which he calls "strings of consciousness," across the space, connecting various works with the floor or the ceiling or other walls. With these, he is attempting to "draw" connections that don't otherwise appear to be there. Through April 24. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Felix Dorose—An installation of prints and large-scale paper cutouts by this German artist inaugurates this new East Village gallery. Through May 10. (New York Kunsthalle, 210 E. 5th St.)

Stan Douglas—This is a hearty installation with a light touch. It consists of a film, made in 1992, of free jazz being performed by four black musicians: trombonist George Lewis, saxophonist Douglas Ewart, bassist Kent Carter, and drummer Oliver Johnson, all of whom lived in Paris during the heyday of free jazz, in the sixties and seventies. The performance has been handsomely filmed in a sixties-television style and is projected on a screen suspended in the middle of the room, an edited version on one side, the outtakes on the other. Through April 24. (Zwirner, 43 Greene St.)

Leon Golub and Nancy Spero—These two are not exactly collaborators, though they have been married to each other since 1951. The show includes some of both artists' best work from the sixties and seventies. It documents the moment when Golub articulated the upheaval of war in his huge painting "Vietnam III" by taking the canvas off its stretcher and tearing it, thereby violating its sacred rectilinearity. The show also features a number of key Speros, including her early paintings on paper, which reveal *her* approach to war imagery: for instance, bombs in the form of human faces with blood gushing out of their mouths. Also on view are two of her monumental cycles, "Codex Artaud" and "Notes in Time on Women." Through April 24. Works from the fifties and nineties will be on view next month. (Baer, 476 Broome St.)

Mark Greenwold—Intense, precise little paintings of family psychodramas enacted right in the back yard. Greenwold poses his family with the compositional care of early-Renaissance and baroque Biblical paintings, yet they always seem uncomfortable, startled. These are mostly normal suburban moments, though there's always some highly inappropriate slipup, like a naked daughter or a son with a dog's body. Everything has been depicted in frightening detail, down to the blades of grass with multicolored shadows crawling across them. Through April 27. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

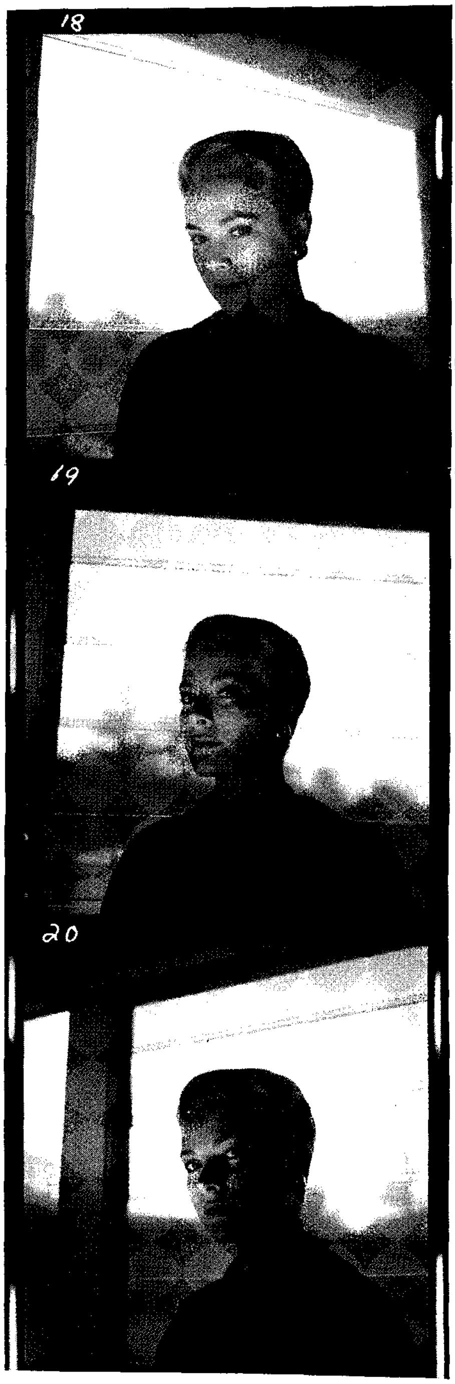
Laurel Katz—There are two principal pieces in this charmingly earnest young artist's show: a farm-woman mannequin wearing a baby-blue plastic astronaut's suit, ready to harvest a field of wheat; and a cow wearing a sheer body coverlet sewn with tubes of liquid coolant. Katz has taken art-historical images—Millais's reaper, Courbet's cow—and recast them for the age of global warming. Through April 24. (Postmasters, 80 Greene St.)

Lois Lane—Nostalgic collages, made with oilstick and old magazine photographs or wallpaper, which delve into the suburban ideal of the late forties—dreamy women and a Kraft-food sort of sublime. Each collage is organized around a painted black rectangle. These works are clearly meant as ironic, but there's more goofing around here than thorough thinking. Through May 1. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Glenn Ligon and Byron Kim—A handsome collaborative project about race, by an African-American and a Korean-American. Some pieces are in Ligon's stencilled-text style; others use Kim's method of combining panels of different skin tones. The best piece, while resembling neither artist's work, relates to both. "Yellow Abstract Painting"—a yellow enamel field with the word "Mongol," as in the pencil manufacturer, painted in small black letters in the center—turns the language of abstract painting against itself, scoffing at its supposed universality and indicting its aura of cultural superiority. Through April 27. (A/C Project Room, 580 Broadway)

Nam June Paik—After a ten-year experiment in uptown living, the Holly Solomon gallery is back in SoHo with a bang. The inaugural show in her new space is the video work that Paik will exhibit this summer at the Venice Biennale. It is a very strong piece—an event, really—comprising many projectors arrayed on a wheeled scaffold in the center of the cavernous gallery, flashing images across the walls and ceiling. The dominant one is a kaleidoscopic display of tropical fish, but it is interspersed with classics of avant-garde video, from a lecture by Joseph Beuys to a variation on a theme of Manet's—a Playboy Bunny lying nude, Olympia-like, on an American flag. The soundtrack includes disco music, horror-film heavy breathing, and the voice of Dick Cavett. Elsewhere, there are lots of smaller works, including a tiny TV in a heart-shaped birdcage, a player piano heaped with more TVs, and an egg surrounded by state-of-the-art video equipment. Through May 8. (Holly Solomon 172 Mercer St.)

Short List—**ILAN AVERBUCH:** Hoffman, 429 West Broadway. Through May 17. . . . **MIRIAM BEERMAN:** Klarfeld Perry, 472 Broome St. Through May 8. . . . **SARAH CHARLESWORTH:** Gorney, 100 Greene St. Through April 24. . . . **RAY CIARROCHI:** Perlow, 560 Broadway. Through April 28. . . . **CARMEN CICERO:** Kelly, 591 Broadway. Through May 4. . . . **MANNY FARBER:** Esman, 575 Broadway. Through May 15. . . . **KATHARINA FRITSCH:** Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. Through June 22. . . . **MARY HAMBLETON:** Auchincloss, 558 Broadway. Through May 19. . . . **JANE HAMMOND:** Freire, 130 Prince St. Through April 24. . . . **JENE HIGHSTEIN:** Klein, 594 Broadway. Through May 9. . . . **RONALD JONES:** Pace, 142 Greene St. Through April 24. . . . **ALEX KATZ:** Rubenstein-Diacono, 130 Prince St. Through May 12. . . . **ON KAWARA:** Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. Through April 24. . . . **BARRY LE VA:** Nolan Eckman, 560 Broadway. Through April 24. . . . **JOHN MILLER:** Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St. Through May 8. . . . **ED MOSES:** Louver, 130 Prince St. Through April 24. . . . **THOMAS NOZKOWSKI:** Protetch, 560 Broadway. Through April 24. . . . **ODILON REDON:** The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. Through May 28. . . . **MIA WESTERLUND ROOSEN:** Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway. Through May 8. . . . **ALLEN RUPPERSBERG:** Gorney, 100 Greene St. Through April 24. . . . **GAEL STACK:** Condeso-Lawer, 524 Broadway. Through May 8.



Grace Kelly by Cecil Beaton, at Danziger gallery.

COURTESY OF DANZIGER GALLERY

PHOTOGRAPHY

Flashes

CECIL BEATON'S life and work have both been given plenty of attention over the years, but exposure is not the same thing as scrutiny. Was he a great photographer, or merely someone with a fair amount of talent and a lot of entrée into the world of glamour, money, and power? The exhibition at Danziger gallery (415 West Broadway; through May 1) may not give the answers, but it does provide an opportunity to see how Beaton worked with his subjects, since it includes prints of contact sheets that allow one to track brief intervals of Beaton's most famous sessions, shot by shot. Among these are sequences with Audrey Hepburn, Grace Kelly, Elizabeth Taylor, Greta Garbo, Pablo Picasso, and Nancy Cunard. These views of the subjects reacting and improvising for Beaton capture something of the collaborative nature of celebrity photography, the element of mutual invention, which isn't acknowledged as much as it ought to be.

The show also includes some of Beaton's fashion shots. There's his celebrated image of models in Charles James dresses, in both color and black-and-white versions. And there are some images that stand out because of the way they treat art as an extension of fashion or as a piece of interior decoration. The clearest example of this—it could almost be a parody—is a color photograph, taken in 1951, of a model wearing a taffeta dress and posed in front of a Jackson Pollock painting. The shoulderless dress is black, with a huge, Shocking-pink bow topping it off at the bust. Her eyes look as if she's thinking about something or someone very far away, certainly not the extraordinary art work behind her, whose black, white, and salmon pink go so well—too well—with her dress. No wonder the Abstract Expressionists drank.

SHORT LIST—**CHRISTIAN BOLTANSKI:** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. Through May 15. . . . **BRASSAÏ:** Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Through May 1. . . . **JAMES CASEBERE:** Klein, 594 Broadway. Through May 29. . . . **WILLIAM CLAXTON:** Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Through May 22. . . . **WILLIAM CLIFT:** Equitable Gallery, 787 Seventh Ave., at 51st St. Through June 12. . . . **PHILIP-LORCA DI CORCIA:** Wooster Gardens, 40 Wooster St. Through May 15. . . . **NANCY GOLDRING:** Baum, 588 Broadway. Through May 1. . . . **RICHARD MISRACH:** Mann, 42 E. 76th St. Through June 5. . . . **DOROTHY NORMAN:** Gallery 292, 120 Wooster St.; through May 15. And International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St; through June 27. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8). . . . **ALEXANDER RODCHENKO:** Sander, 19 E. 76th St. Through April 30. . . . **JOYCE TENNESON:** Greenberg, 20 Wooster St. Through May 15. . . . **PENELOPE UMBRICO:** Saul, 560 Broadway. Through May 1. . . . **JOEL-PETER WITKIN:** Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. Through April 24.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Guggenheim Museum SoHo, the American Museum of Natural History, the Bronx Museum of the Arts, the New York Public Library, and the Queens Museum.)

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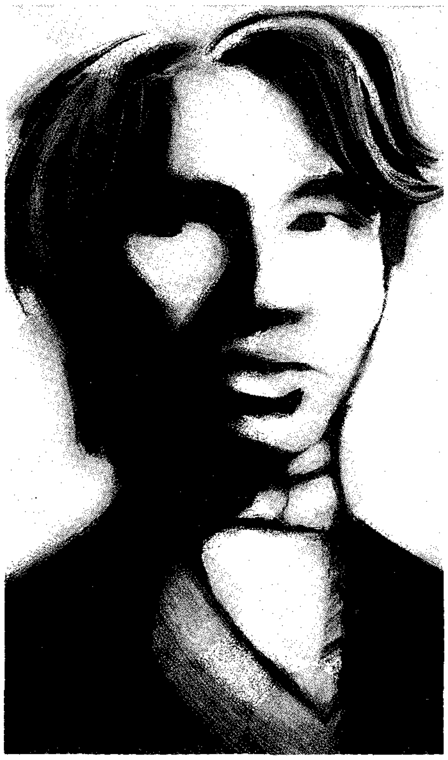

Dmitri Hvorostovsky at Carnegie Hall.

JOHANNA GOODMAN

MUSIC

After School

NEW YORK'S conservatories—facing not exactly fewer financial pressures but at least different ones—are often able to be more adventurous producers of opera than our professional companies. The Manhattan School of Music and the Mannes College of Music, if their upcoming presentations come off well, are as likely as the Met to color the end of the season in the memory of opera lovers. At the former, Gluck's "Iphigénie en Tauride" is to be offered, on April 21, April 23, and April 25. The latter will give Virgil Thomson's "Four Saints in Three Acts," on April 24, April 26, and April 28, not at its West Side home but in the sanctuary of Christ Church United Methodist (Park Avenue at 60th Street). They make good, if somewhat jarring, counterpoint: the Gluck is intense, measured, elevated, serious in its every breath. Thomson's opera is a musical chatterbox, a spray of melodious banter that dances along with Gertrude Stein's irreverent, virtuoso word-spinning. Of course, everything depends on perspective; there is a point of view from which "Four Saints" can seem sublime and another (Thomsonian or Steinian) from which Gluck's profundities can perhaps seem faintly ridiculous. Both works, coming at crossroads in the development of the lyric theatre, looked in new directions. May the productions capture their daring, and may the schools be thanked for the attempt.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Alice Tully Hall, 875-5050; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—**LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR,** with Martile Rowland, Alfredo Kraus, Haijing Fu, and Jeffrey Wells; conducted by Michelangelo Veltri. (April 21 at 8.) . . . With Sumi Jo in the title role. (April 24 at 12:30.) . . . **SIEGFRIED,** with Gwyneth Jones, Wolfgang Schmidt, Graham Clark, James Morris, Hitomi Katagiri, Ekkehard Wlaschiha, Matti Salminen, and Dawn Upshaw; James Levine. (April 22 at 6.) . . . **LA TRAVIATA,** with Victoria Villarroel, Franco Farina, and Kim Josephson; Samuel Cristler. (April 23 at 8.) . . . **GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG,** with Gwyneth Jones, Marie Plette, Tatiana Troyanos, Wolfgang Schmidt, Alan Held, Ekkehard Wlaschiha, and Matti Salminen; James Levine. (April 24 at 6:30.) . . . **DAS RHEINGOLD,** with Hei-Kyung Hong, Hanna Schwarz, Hitomi Katagiri, Graham Clark, Heinz Zednik, Robert Hale, Ekkehard Wlaschiha, Matthias Hölle, and Matti Salminen; James Levine. (April 26 at 8.) . . . **DIE WALKÜRE,** with Gwyneth Jones, Jessye Norman, Hanna Schwarz, Gary Lakes, Robert Hale, and John Macurdy; James Levine. (April 27 at 6.) (Metropolitan Opera House. The company's season ends on May 2.)

BROWNLEE OPERA THEATRE—Presenting Gluck's "Iphigénie en Tauride," sung in French, with English supertitles; Paulette Haupt conducting. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. 749-2802. April 21 and April 23 at 8, and April 25 at 2:30, with a pre-performance lecture by director James Robinson on April 21 at 6:30.)

AMATO OPERA COMPANY—Presenting Verdi's "Otello," in English. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. April 24 at 7:30 and April 25 at 2:30. Through May 16.)

MANNES OPERA ENSEMBLE—Presenting Virgil Thomson's "Four Saints in Three Acts," with Michael Charry conducting, and stage direction by Paul Echols. (Christ Church United Methodist, Park Ave. at 60th St. April 24, April 26, and April 28, all at 8. For information about tickets, call 496-8524.)

RECITALS

SHURA CHERKASSKY—Back around the turn of the century, Mily Balakirev's "Islamey" (a colorful, ostensibly Oriental fantasy concocted in 1869) was widely conceded to be the most difficult piano piece ever written. The trophy was later relinquished to Ravel (in 1908, for his "Gaspard de la Nuit"), and thence to any number of modernists. Though over the years "Islamey" has slipped to the edges of the repertoire, it hasn't grown any easier to play. Mr. Cherkassky, the octogenarian wunderkind, will give it a whirl, along with other Romantic warhorses: Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor (as grandly transcribed by Walter Tausig), Schubert's A-Major Sonata (D. 959), and Chopin's F-Sharp-Minor Polonaise and Variations on "Là ci darem la mano." True to his custom, Mr. Cherkassky will also offer a taste of the modern, in the guise of Berio's "Encores pour piano." (Carnegie Hall. April 21 at 8.)

JEFFREY SIEGEL—Pianist, performing and talking about Chopin. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. April 21 at 8.)

BARGEMUSIC—Presenting chamber music by Handel, Beethoven (his Violin Sonata No. 8), and Brahms (his G-Minor Piano Quartet). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. April 22 at 6:30 and April 25 at 4, with the Thursday event being a candlelit benefit, with dinner.)

TOKYO STRING QUARTET—Performing quartets by Beethoven (in C Minor, Op. 18, No. 4) and Ravel, as well as Schumann's Piano Quintet (with the help of Alicia de Larrocha). (Carnegie Hall. April 22 at 8.)

MERANOFEST—A stateside glimpse of the concerts, lectures, and master classes that will occur in July and August at the festival's home in Merano, Italy. April 23 at 3: Clarinettist Stanley Drucker and pianist Lev Natochenny perform sonatas by Brahms and Poulenc. . . . ¶ April 26 at 3: Violist Rebecca Young joins Mr. Natochenny in sonatas by Bach, Shostakovich, and Hindemith. (Aaron Copland School of Music Concert Hall, Queens College, Kissena Blvd., Flushing. No tickets necessary. For information about these and other Meranofest events at Queens College, call 1-718 997-3800.)

VINLAND ENSEMBLE—Presenting music by Grieg (including his "Haugtussa," with soprano Margaret Astrup and pianist Mary Ann Brown), Niels Gade, and Dan Welcher. (Institute of Fine Arts, 1 E. 78th St. April 23 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

KRYSTIAN ZIMERMAN—The pianist performs works by Debussy (Book I of his Preludes, plus "Estampes") and Schubert (his Sonata in B-Flat, D. 960). (Carnegie Hall. April 23 at 8.)

FREDERICK ZLOTKIN AND DAVID BUECHNER—The cellist and the pianist perform Schumann's "Fantasiestücke" (Op. 73), as well as sonatas by Mendelssohn (in D Major), Shostakovich (in D Minor), and Debussy. (Hubbard Recital Hall, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. April 24 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

KRONOS STRING QUARTET—Performing works by Henry Cowell, George Antheil, and Raymond Scott, as well as several more recent compositions; with soprano Dawn Upshaw assisting. (Alice Tully Hall. April 24 at 8.)

WIND SOLOISTS OF THE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA OF EUROPE—Eight wind players performing works by Mozart (including some "Don Giovanni" *Harmoniemusik*), Weber, and Beethoven (his Octet). (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. April 25 at 2. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.)

DONNA-LEE WENG—The pianist includes in her program sonatas by Schubert (in A Major, D. 664), Griffes, and Chopin (in B-Flat Minor), and nocturnes by Villa-Lobos, Scriabin, Poulenc, and Lowell Liebermann (the last being a United States première). (Alice Tully Hall. April 25 at 3.)

ROSEMARY GLYDE—Violist, playing the première of Richard Lane's "Concert Music for Two Violas" (with the assistance of Emanuel Vardi); two works for viola, string quartet, and piano (Turina's "Scène Andalouse" and Judith Shatin's "Glyph"); and compositions by Lillian Fuchs and Mr. Vardi. Pianist Norman Carey and the Essex String Quartet also assist. (Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. April 25 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

KEITH CALMES—Classical guitarist, playing works by Villa-Lobos, Segovia, Sor, Ginastera, and others. (Weill Recital Hall. April 25 at 5:30.)

CELLO—Four cellos, to be precise, intoning music by Barber, Gershwin, Mendelssohn, and others, in a salon setting. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. April 25 at 6. No tickets necessary.)

MANNEKRIANNA—Marianna Rosett and Ken Bichel, an improvising piano duo. (Steinway Hall, 109 W. 57th St. April 25 at 6. For information about admission, which is free, call 246-1100.)

MARILYN HORNE—The mezzo-soprano's program includes songs by Wagner (his "Wesendonck-Lieder") and Xavier Montsalvatge, plus arias by Thomas Augustine Arne (including his "Rule Brittania," which first fell on English ears in 1740, during the finale of his masque "Alfred"). Pianist Martin Katz assists. (Alice Tully Hall. April 25 at 7:30.)

MARTIN STONER—In his New York début recital, the violinist performs works that were associated with Fritz Kreisler, including Ysaÿe's unaccompanied Sonata No. 4 (dedicated to Kreisler), sonatas by Beethoven (the "Spring") and Schubert (in A Major), and several of Kreisler's own compositions and arrangements; with soprano Betsy Norden and pianist Constance Moore. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 25 at 7:30.)

Ex Umbris—A Renaissance-music group, offering music from fifteenth-century France, Italy, and Spain. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. 787-2755. April 25 at 8.)

Silesian String Quartet—Performing quartets by Szymanowski (his Second), Lutoslawski, and Penderecki (his "Der unterbrochene Gedanke"), as well as the New York première of William Thomas McKinley's String Quartet No. 8. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 26 at 7.)

Manhattan String Quartet—Concluding its season-long survey of Shostakovich's string quartets with No. 13, No. 14, and No. 15. (Walter Reade Theatre, 165 W. 65th St, plaza level. April 26 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.)

Dmitri Hvorostovsky—The baritone from Krasnoyarsk sings an all-Russian program, including works by Tchaikovsky, Mussorgsky, and Rachmaninoff; with pianist Mikhail Arkadiev. (Carnegie Hall. April 26 at 8.)

Misha Amory—Violist, performing sonatas by Brahms (in F Minor, Op. 120, No. 1) and Paganini, Brahms' Two "Viola" Songs (Op. 91, with mezzo-soprano Marietta Simpson), and works by Bloch, Jeffrey Mumford, and Sebastian Currier; with pianist Thomas Sauer. (Alice Tully Hall. April 26 at 8.)

Piping Up—The installation of a new organ of quality is a notable transformation in the musical landscape of any community. David Higgs, of the Eastman School of Music, will preside over four manuals, sixty-eight stops, and more than five thousand pipes at the dedicatory concert of a new tracker-action instrument built by the London-based firm of N. P. Mander; rising forty-five feet from the base of the choir loft to the church's ceiling, it is the largest mechanical-action organ ever constructed in the British Isles, larger even than those Mander built for the St. Paul's, Canterbury, and Chichester Cathedrals. Higgs' eclectic program, designed to show off the instrument's stylistic breadth, will comprise Bach's Fantasia and Fugue in G Minor, a *Noël* by Daquin, a canon by Schumann, Franck's "Pièce Héroïque," David Conte's "Pastorale and Toccata" (in its New York première), Hindemith's Sonata No. 2, and Duruflé's Suite (Op. 5). (Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, Park Ave. at 84th St. 439-8044. April 27 at 8.)

Edward Said and Diana Takieddine—A piano duo (the male half of which is better known as a scholar of comparative literature, Middle Eastern cultural history, and the social history of music) performing two-piano compositions by Mozart, Schubert, Chopin, Brahms, and Britten. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. April 27 at 8.)

Andiamo Chamber Ensemble—Presenting works by American composers who rose to prominence in the thirties: Arthur Berger, Paul Bowles, Henry Brant, Lehman Engel, Vivian Fine, Bernard Herrmann, and Elie Siegmeister. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. April 27 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Leonard Slatkin conducting. April 22 and April 24 at 8, April 23 at 11 A.M., and April 27 at 7:30: Haydn's Symphony No. 69, the première of Philip Ramey's Horn Concerto (featuring Philip Myers), the suite from Copland's "Appalachian Spring," and Ravel's "Rapsodie Espagnole." . . ¶ April 24 at 2: The same program, shorn of the Ramey.

Riverside Symphony—George Rothman conducts Haydn's Symphony No. 66, Prokofiev's "Classical" Symphony, the suite from Roussel's "The Spider's Feast," and the première of Andrew Imbrie's Piano Concerto No. 3 (featuring Alan Feinberg). (Alice Tully Hall. April 21 at 8.)

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Dennis Russell Davies conducts three works that suggest different ways in which twentieth-century composers have flirted with the traditional concertante format: Berg's Chamber Concerto for Piano and Violin with Thirteen Winds; Bernstein's

I remember the first time I met Simone and Jean-Paul.

We were having lunch at a little cafe near the Bois de Boulogne.

Or was it the King Cole Bar at the St. Regis?

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FRATELLI
ROSSETTI

MUSIC–Cont'd

Symphony No. 2 ("The Age of Anxiety," after a poem by Auden, in which Lukas Foss will perform the prominent solo-piano part); and the première of "Mix for Orchestra," by Henry Threadgill, in which the orchestral component—partly pre-composed, partly improvised—unfolds around a solo percussion part improvised by Max Roach. Mr. Roach will also perform his own solo-percussion work "Three Four-Part Inventions for Multiple Percussion." (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. April 23-24 at 8.)

Orpheus—The conductorless chamber orchestra plays Respighi's "Gli Uccelli," Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1 (with Richard Goode), and Prokofiev's "Classical" Symphony, as well as Ives' Symphony No. 3 ("The Camp Meeting"), which won its composer a Pulitzer Prize in 1947, forty-three years after it had been completed. (Carnegie Hall. April 24 at 8.)

New York Concert Singers—Judith Clurman directs a program that includes settings of texts from the "Song of Songs," by James D. Wagoner, Leo Kraft, Charles Davidson, Richard Hundley, Hugo Weisgall, and Mark Gresham. (Temple Shaaray Tefila, Second Ave. at 79th St. April 25 at 3. Admission by contribution.)

Cantata Singers of the Choral Symphony Society—David Labovitz directs choral works by Otto Luening, Wallingford Riegger, and Ned Rorem. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. April 25 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Musica Viva—Walter Klauss directs the chorus and period-instrument orchestra in Bach's Cantatas No. 82 ("Ich habe genug," featuring bass Kurt Owen Richards), No. 150, and No. 182, as well as his motet "Lobet den Herrn" and Fifth "Brandenburg" Concerto. (All Souls Unitarian Church, Lexington Ave. at 80th St. 535-5530. April 25 at 7.)

Philadelphia Orchestra—Riccardo Muti conducts Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 (the "Emperor," with Garrick Ohlsson) and Berio's "Epiphanies" (a new work, featuring mezzo-soprano Charlotte Hellekant). (Carnegie Hall. April 27 at 8.)

Clarion Concerts—Newell Jenkins directs an all-Boccherini program; with soloists Beverly Hoch (soprano), Alexandra Montano (mezzo-soprano), and Robert White (tenor). (Merkin Concert Hall. April 27 at 8.)

Ascension Music Chorus and Orchestra—Dennis Keene directs a bit of everything, from Victoria and Palestrina to Duruflé and Holst. (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. 254-8553. April 27 at 8.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Jesus Jones/Stereo MC's—On their third album, "Perverse," Jesus Jones have been reborn as digitized prophets of a cyberpunk world. (Their lead singer, Mike Edwards, tells us that "this time the revolution will be computerized. . . .") The conceit works fine on a couple of songs, but on most of them the band sounds like the Duran Duran of techno. More consistent are the Stereo MC's, whose new release, "Connected," offers a wonderful groove and an irresistibly danceable British interpretation of hip-hop. Rob Birch, with his thick accent and killer sense of rhythm, raps fast and furiously, and the rest of the band—a vocal trio, a mixmaster d.j., and a brilliant drummer—gives him lush backing. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. April 22 at 8.)

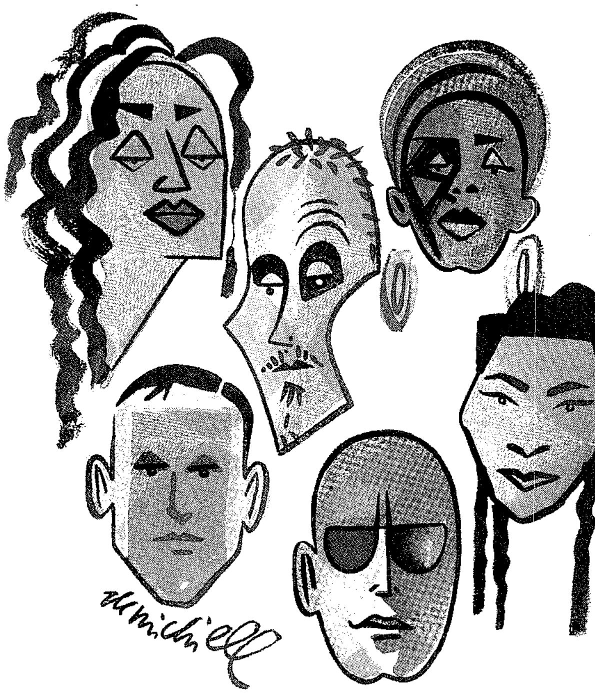
Lemonheads—Academy, 234 W. 43rd St. 307-7171. April 27 at 7.

Tony Bennett—Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, Walt Whitman Hall, Brooklyn College. 1-718 951-4500. April 24 at 8 and April 25 at 2.

Einstürzende Neubauten—Roseland. April 23 at 8.

"Lyrics & Lyricists"—The penultimate program in this year's series salutes Dorothy Fields. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. April 25 at 2:30 and 8 and April 26 at 2 and 8.)

Dick Hyman and Derek Smith—92nd Street Y. April 27 at 8.



Stereo MC's at Roseland.

ROBERT DEMICHIELL

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Knicks—Vs. the Nets, April 21 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Chicago Bulls, April 25 at 1.

Nets—Vs. the Orlando Magic, April 23 at 7:30.

Mets—Vs. the San Francisco Giants, April 21-22 at 7:40. . . . ¶ Vs. the San Diego Padres April 23 at 7:40 and April 24-25 at 1:40. . . . ¶ Vs. the Los Angeles Dodgers, April 26 at 7:40 and April 27 at 1:40.

CHAMPIONSHIP HOCKEY

Stanley Cup Playoffs—As of press time, little is certain in the volatile Patrick Division—except that the Rangers are through.

Islanders—Vs. the Pittsburgh Penguins, the Washington Capitals, or the Devils, April 22, 24, and 26 (if necessary) at 7:35.

Devils—Vs. the Pittsburgh Penguins, the Washington Capitals, or the Islanders, April 22, 24, and 26 (if necessary) at 7:35.

(The Knicks play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; the Devils and the Nets at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900; and the Mets at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Do the Locomotion—Sixteen kinetic sculptures make up "SpringWorks," the current show in the New York Hall of Science's cathedral-like exhibition space. The work includes a group of inflating-and-deflating latex weather balloons hung from the hall's eighty-five-foot ceiling and a strobe-lighted installation that gives the illusion of a book being transformed into a bird and then into a crumpled piece of paper. Curator Cynthia Pannucci pushed the artists to "expose the guts," in order to show how the art pieces work; the insides are the most interesting parts of some sculptures. (Flushing Meadow Park. Wednesdays to Sundays, 11 to 5. Through May 2. No charge beyond museum admission.)

The Grass Is Always Greener—Even in this skyscraper town, there will be lots of green activity on the twenty-third anniversary of Earth Day. April 22-27: An Eco-Festival, with performances by the Bread and Puppet Theatre, among other events, will be held at the Theatre for the New City. (155 First Ave., at 10th St. For more information, call 226-7171. Mondays to Fridays, 7:30 to 10; Saturdays and Sundays, 4 to 10. Through May 2.). . . ¶ April 24-25, from 11 to 5: Ships involved in environmental cleanup and recycling will be docked at the South Street Seaport. There will also be storytelling, workshops, and performances. (Pier 16, East River at Fulton St. For more information, call 669-9424.). . . ¶ April 24-25, from noon to 4: The New York Botanical Garden will provide entertainment, tours, and workshops about recycling and composting. On Saturday, at 2, volunteers will form a giant human chain to "hug the forest." (Bronx Park. 1-718 817-8700.). . . ¶ April 24-25, from noon to 6: A panel of architects, scientists, and others will discuss ways to encourage a new symbiosis between ecology and technology. (Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. For more information, call 431-5795.)

Sakura Matsuri—This Cherry Blossom Festival is a celebration of all things Japanese. Offerings will include a tea ceremony, tours of the bonsai museum, block printing and calligraphy demonstrations, and folktales. The Taiko drummers will perform at 1:30 on Saturday. (Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., near Grand Army Plaza. April 24-25, from 10:30 to 5. No tickets necessary.)

Author Readings—April 23 at 7: Eamon Grennan and Mona Simpson will read from their own work. (New York University, Casa Italiana, 24 W. 12th St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ April 23 at 10: Poet Cathy Bowman will read from her forthcoming "1-800-HOT-RIBS." (Nuyorican Poets Cafe, 236 E. 3rd St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.). . . ¶ April 25 at 4: Martin Edmunds, Ruth-Miriam Garnett, and Andrew McCord will read from their own poetry. (Alliance Stage, 197 East Broadway, at Jefferson St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ April 26 at 8: Anna Quindlen will read from a collection of her *Times* columns, "Thinking Out Loud." (Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.). . . ¶ April 27 at 7:30: Denise Levertov will read from her own poetry. (Dia Center for the Arts, 155 Mercer St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

Other People's Words—April 26 at 7:30: Readings from a new collection of Henry David Thoreau's writing. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 645-5848.). . . ¶ April 26 at 8: A reading of Susan Sontag's recent play about Alice James. (Bruno Walter Auditorium, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center. No tickets necessary.)

Talks—April 22 at 7:30: Bill Moyers will discuss his book and television series, "Healing and the Mind." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.). . . ¶ April 22 at 8: Robert Rauschenberg and others will talk about their collaborations with choreographer Trisha Brown. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Tickets at the door on the night of the talk.)

Weekend Walks—April 24 at 2: Big Onion Walking Tours will offer its first tour of the Bowery. For more information, call 439-1090. . . . ¶ April 25, from 1 to 6: Victorian Flatbush house tours. For more information, call 1-718 469-8990.

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Patricia D Runner

Patricia Runner
Technician

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				21	22	23
24	25	26	27			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF," STARTING ON PAGE 26.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: Through April 22: "Mac" (directed by John Turturro). From April 23: "Map of the Human Heart" (directed by Vincent Ward).
Theatre 2: "The Crying Game" (†).
Theatre 3: "Léolo" (†).
Theatre 4: "Strictly Ballroom" (†).
Theatre 5: "Okoge" (Takehiro Nakajima, in Japanese).
Theatre 6: "Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau; a Mexican film, in Spanish).

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Through April 22: "The War Against the Indians" (Harry Rasky), a documentary.
From April 23: "Good Evening, Mr. Wallenberg" (1990, Kjell Grede).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Boiling Point" (James B. Harris), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 2: "Passion Fish" (†).
Theatre 3: "Point of No Return" (†).

Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "El Mariachi" (†).
Theatre 2: "This Boy's Life" (†).
Theatre 3: "Indecent Proposal" (†).
Theatre 4: "Just Another Girl on the I.R.T" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Crush" (†).
Theatre 6: "Falling Down" (Joel Schumacher), with Michael Douglas.
Theatre 7: "Groundhog Day" (†).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through April 22: "Nitrate Kisses" (Barbara Hammer); and "Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media" (Mark Achbar and Peter Wintonick).
From April 23: To be announced.

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "The Last Days of Chez Nous" (†).
Theatre 2: "Bodies, Rest & Motion" (†).
Theatre 3: Through April 22: "The Adventures of Huck Finn" (†). From April 23: "Who's the Man?" (Ted Demme).
Theatre 4: Through April 22: (Matinées only) "Aladdin," an animated film; and (evenings only) "Damage" (Louis Malle). From April 23: "Indian Summer" (Mike Binder).
Theatre 5: "Howards End" (James Ivory).
Theatre 6: "Claire of the Moon" (Nicole Conn).
Theatre 7: "Unforgiven" (†).

19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki), with Melanie Griffith, John Goodman, and Don Johnson.
Theatre 2: Through April 22: "Watch It" (Thomas Flynn). From April 23: "Who's the Man?" (Ted Demme).
Theatre 3: "Point of No Return" (†).
Theatre 4: "Indecent Proposal" (†).
Theatre 5: "Boiling Point" (James B. Harris), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 6: "Unforgiven" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Scent of a Woman" (†).

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: Through April 22: "The Panama Deception" (Barbara Trent), a documentary. From April 23: "The Dark Half" (George A. Romero), with Timothy Hutton.
Theatre 2: Through April 22: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki). From April 23: "Indian Summer" (Mike Binder).
Theatre 3: "The Adventures of Huck Finn" (†).
Theatre 4: "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik), with Johnny Depp.

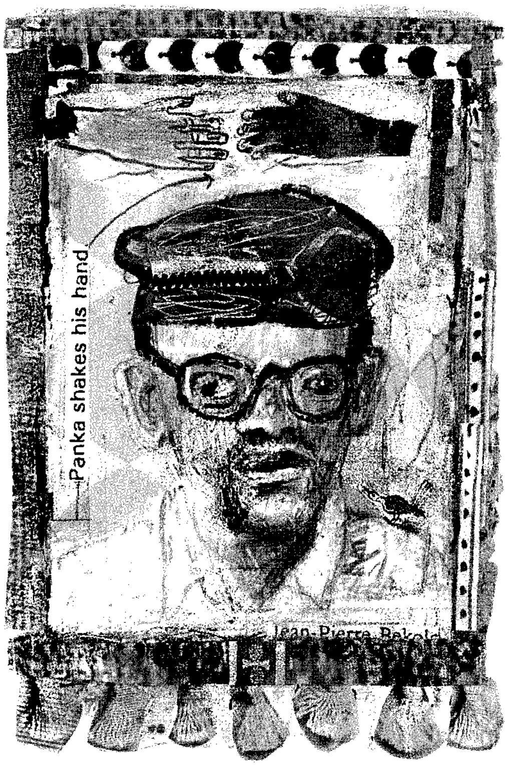
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Indecent Proposal" (†).
Theatre 2: "Boiling Point" (James B. Harris), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 3: "Point of No Return" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Cop and a Half" (Henry Winkler), with Burt Reynolds.

Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau; a Mexican film, in Spanish).

Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "The Crying Game" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Crying Game" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Jack the Bear" (Marshall Herskovitz), with Danny DeVito.



At the Walter Reade Theatre, Jean-Pierre Bekolo's "Quartier Mozart."

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Ethan Frome" (John Madden), with Liam Neeson.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Boiling Point" (James B. Harris), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 2: Through April 22: "Boiling Point." From April 23: "The Dark Half" (George A. Romero), with Timothy Hutton.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"The Adventures of Huck Finn" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "The Sandlot" (†).
Theatre 2: "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Wide Sargasso Sea" (†).
Theatre 2: Through April 22: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki). From April 23: "Indian Summer" (Mike Binder).
Theatre 3: "Howards End" (James Ivory).

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: "Strictly Ballroom" (†).
Theatre 2: "Groundhog Day" (†).
Theatre 3: "A Few Good Men" (Rob Reiner).
Theatre 4: "Cop and a Half" (Henry Winkler).
Theatre 5: "Watch It" (Thomas Flynn).
Theatre 6: "Scent of a Woman" (†).

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Point of No Return" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Crush" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Unforgiven" (†).

New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Falling Down" (Joel Schumacher), with Michael Douglas.
Theatre 2: "Indecent Proposal" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Last Days of Chez Nous" (†).

Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"This Boy's Life" (†).

East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Indecent Proposal" (†).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Cop and a Half" (Henry Winkler).
Theatre 2: "Sandlot" (†).

Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: "The Crush" (†).
Theatre 2: "Just Another Girl on the I.R.T" (†).
Theatre 3: "Married to It" (Arthur Hiller).
Theatre 4: "The Adventures of Huck Finn" (†).
Theatre 5: "Boiling Point" (James B. Harris), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 6: Through April 22: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III" (Stuart Gillard). From April 23: "The Dark Half" (George A. Romero), with Timothy Hutton.
Theatre 7: "Point of No Return" (†).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Unforgiven" (†).
Theatre 2: Through April 22: "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik), with Johnny Depp. From April 23: "Indian Summer" (Mike Binder).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: "Joan Mitchell: Portrait of an Abstract Painter" (directed by Marion Cajori); and "Guerrillas in Our Midst" (Amy Harrison).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "Visions of Light: The Art of Cinematography" (†).

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "The Sandlot" (†).
Theatre 2: "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik), with Johnny Depp.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Scent of a Woman" (†).
Theatre 2: Through April 22: "Cop and a Half" (Henry Winkler). From April 23: "The Dark Half" (George A. Romero), with Timothy Hutton.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "American Friends" (Tristan Powell), with Michael Palin.
Theatre 2: "Indochine" (†).
Theatre 3: "Riff-Raff" (Ken Loach).
Theatre 4: "Enchanted April" (Mike Newell).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "The Sandlot" (†).
Theatre 2: "Scent of a Woman" (†).
Theatre 3: "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik), with Johnny Depp.
Theatre 4: "The Crush" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Crying Game" (†).
Theatre 6: "Passion Fish" (†).
Theatre 7: Through April 22: "Cop and a Half" (Henry Winkler), with Burt Reynolds. From April 23: "Indian Summer" (Mike Binder).
Theatre 8: Through April 22: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III" (Stuart Gillard). From April 23: "The Dark Half" (George A. Romero), with Timothy Hutton.
Theatre 9: "Falling Down" (Joel Schumacher), with Michael Douglas.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Jack the Bear" (Marshall Herskovitz), with Danny DeVito.
Theatre 2: "The Adventures of Huck Finn" (†).
Theatre 3: "Enchanted April" (Mike Newell).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
Through April 22: "The Adventures of Huck Finn" (†)
From April 23: "Indian Summer" (Mike Binder).

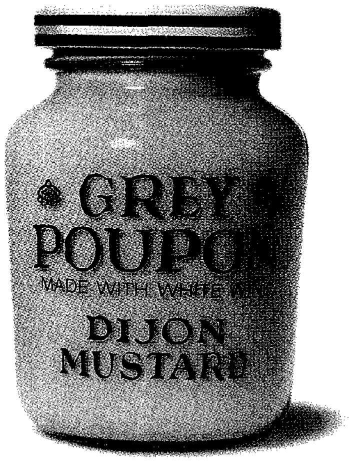
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Jack the Bear" (Marshall Herskovitz), with Danny DeVito.
Theatre 2: "Scent of a Woman" (†).
Theatre 3: "Tous les Matins du Monde" (Alain Corneau, in French).
Theatre 4: "Enchanted April" (Mike Newell).
Theatre 5: "Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik).
Theatre 6: "Groundhog Day" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III" (Stuart Gillard).

BETH BARTHOLOMEW

Theory:
the French make
great lovers.

Fact:
the French make
great mustard.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MOVIES HOUSES—Cont'd

FESTIVAL, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Passion Fish" (†).

57TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Bodies, Rest & Motion" (†).

CARNEGIE HALL CINEMAS, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau; a Mexican film, in Spanish).
Theatre 2: "Strictly Ballroom" (†).

ANGELIKA 57, 225 W. 57th. (586-1900)
"El Mariachi" (†).

FINE ARTS, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"The Lover" (Jean-Jacques Annaud).

CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Howards End" (James Ivory).

COLUMBUS CIRCLE, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Unforgiven" (†).

62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Benny & Joon" (Jeremiah Chechik).

LINCOLN PLAZA CINEMAS, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Léolo" (†).
Theatre 2: "Indochine" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Crying Game" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Story of Qiu Ju" (†).
Theatre 5: "Olivier Olivier" (Agnieszka Holland; in French).
Theatre 6: "Stolen Children" ("Il Ladro di Bambini"; Gianni Amelio, in Italian).

REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Scent of a Woman" (†).

84TH STREET SIXPLEX, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "This Boy's Life" (†).
Theatre 2: "Falling Down" (Joel Schumacher), with Michael Douglas.
Theatre 3: "Indecent Proposal" (†).
Theatre 4: "Boiling Point" (James B. Harris), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 5: "Point of No Return" (†).
Theatre 6: Through April 22: "The Crush" (†). From April 23: "Indian Summer" (Mike Binder).

METRO CINEMA I AND 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Cop and a Half" (Henry Winkler).
Theatre 2: "The Adventures of Huck Finn" (†).

OLYMPIA I AND II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III" (Stuart Gillard).
Theatre 2: "The Sandlot" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

CRITERION CENTER, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "The Crying Game" (†).
Theatre 2: "Boiling Point" (directed by James B. Harris), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 3: Through April 22: "Best of the Best 2" (Robert Radler). From April 23: "Who's the Man?" (Ted Demme).
Theatre 4: "The Sandlot" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Crush" (†).
Theatre 6: "Just Another Girl on the I.R.T" (†).
Theatre 7: "Point of No Return" (†).

EMBASSY I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki).

EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "Fire in the Sky" (Robert Lieberman).
Theatre 2: "A Far Off Place" (Mikael Salomon).
Theatre 3: "Aladdin," an animated film

ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Indecent Proposal" (†).

NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through April 22: "CB4" (Tamra Davis). From April 23: "The Dark Half" (George A. Romero), with Timothy Hutton.
Theatre 2: "Cop and a Half" (Henry Winkler).

REVIVAL HOUSES

FILM FORUM 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
"Money from Home" (1954, directed by George Marshall), with Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis; and "The Charge at Feather River" (1953, Gordon Douglas), with Guy Madison. Both films are in 3-D.

GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
Through April 22: "Alexander's Ragtime Band" (1938, Henry King), with Alice Faye and Don Ameche; and "Born to Dance" (1936, Roy Del Ruth), with Eleanor Powell and James Stewart.
April 23-24: "Diamond Horseshoe" (1945, George Seaton), with Betty Grable and Dick Haymes; and "Dancing Lady" (1933, Robert Z. Leonard), with Fred Astaire and Joan Crawford.
April 25-26: "Bells Are Ringing" (1960, Vincente Minnelli), with Judy Holliday and Dean Martin; and "It's Always Fair Weather" (1955, Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen), with Kelly, Dan Dailey, and Cyd Charisse.
From April 27: "Sweethearts" (1938, W. S. Van Dyke), with Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy; and "On the Avenue" (†).

THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
April 21: "Touch of Evil" (1958, Orson Welles), with Welles, Charlton Heston, and Janet Leigh; and "Shadow of a Doubt" (1942, Alfred Hitchcock), with Teresa Wright and Joseph Cotten.
April 22: "Tess" (1980, Roman Polanski).
April 23-24: "Fellini Satyricon" (1970, Federico Fellini; in Italian); and "Fellini's Roma" (1972, Fellini; in Italian).
April 25: "Notorious" (1946, Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman; and "Spellbound" (1945, Hitchcock), with Bergman and Gregory Peck.
April 26: "La Ronde" (1950, Max Ophuls; in French), with Gérard Philipe; and "Le Plaisir" (1952, Ophuls; in French), with Claude Dauphin.
April 27: "Alfie" (1966, Lewis Gilbert), with Michael Caine; and "Educating Rita" (see below).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—April 22 at 2:30 and 6: "The Whales of August" (1987, directed by Lindsay Anderson), with Bette Davis and Lillian Gish. . . . ¶ April 22 at 3 and 6: "Black Mountain Revisited" (1991, Jim Skipper), a documentary. . . . ¶ April 23 at 2:30: "The Ogre of Athens" (1956, Nikos Koundouros; in Greek). . . . ¶ April 23 at 3, April 24-25 at 2:30 and 5, and April 27 at 1 and 3: Six different programs of short French films. . . . ¶ April 23 at 6: "Stella" (†). . . . ¶ April 24 at 2: "Reconstruction" (1970, Theo Angelopoulos; in Greek). . . . ¶ April 24 at 5: "Electra" (†). . . . ¶ April 25 at 2: "Never on Sunday" (1960, Jules Dassin; in English and Greek), with Melina Mercouri and Dassin. . . . ¶ April 25 at 5: "Magic City" (1954, Nikos Koundouros; in Greek). . . . ¶ April 26 at 2:30: "Thanos and Despina" (1967, Nicos Papatakis; in Greek). . . . ¶ April 26 at 6: "Idlers of the Fertile Valley" (1978, Nikos Panayotopoulos; in Greek). . . . ¶ April 27 at 2:30: "Evdokia—Soldier's Girl" (1971, Alexis Damianos; in Greek). . . . ¶ April 27 at 6: "1922" (1978, Koundouros; in Greek).

WALTER READE THEATRE, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—A program of recent films from Africa.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—"Masters of Cinematography: A Haskell Wexler Retrospective." April 24 at 2: "American Graffiti" (†). . . . ¶ April 24 at 4:30: "The Babe" (Arthur Hiller). . . . ¶ April 25 at 2: "Matewan" (†). . . . ¶ April 25 at 4:30: "Colors" (1988, Dennis Hopper).

SYMPHONY SPACE, B'way at 95th St. (864-5400)—April 27 at 7:30: "The Devil Is a Woman" (1935, Josef von Sternberg), with Marlene Deitrich, Lionel Atwill, and Cesar Romero. . . . ¶ April 27 at 9:15: "Potemkin" (1925, Sergei Eisenstein; a Russian silent film).

FLORENCE GOULD HALL, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—April 21 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Loin du Bresil" (1992, Tilly; in French), with Emmanuèle Riva.

LE CINEMATOGRAPHE AT ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—April 22 at 6:30 and 8:15: "Numero Deux" (1981, Jean-Luc Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville; in French).

NEW SCHOOL, 66 W. 12th St. (229-5690)—A festival of recent films from Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, and Slovakia. Many of the directors will be present.

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, 200 Eastern Parkway. (1-718 638-5000)—"Modern Days, Ancient Nights: Thirty Years of African Filmmaking." April 24 at 12:30 and April 25 at 2:30: "Ta Dona" (1991, Adama Drabo). . . . ¶ April 24 at 2:30 and April 25 at 12:30: "The Blue Eyes of Yonta" (1992, Flora Gomes).

MOVIES IN BRIEF

SEE PRECEDING PAGES FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS. IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Lovely Rita

SELF-AWARENESS without self-consciousness: that's what Michael Caine delivers in Lewis Gilbert's 1983 film of Willy Russell's play, "Educating Rita" (playing April 27, at Theatre 80 St. Marks). The actor brings scruffy humor and intelligence to Frank, the alcoholic tutor of a feisty working-class hairdresser who enrolls in an Open University program and jolts him out of his stupor. Julie Walters portrays this life force, Rita, with skilled theatricality. Just as Rita puts the kibosh on condescension and pity, Walters' ticklish inflections and offbeat timing spike any trace of conventional comedy and pathos. Caine's antithetical performing style—less bravura, more subtly expansive—meshes perfectly with hers. Frank can't stand the routineness of his failures as a poet, an English prof, a person; Caine expresses his defeated spirit in the smallest reflex gestures, like the weary way he enters an office that Rita finds astounding. She, of course, is the heroine. But Caine, with his empathic leaps, brings conviction to Frank's anger at the banality and phoniness that have overrun his private life and his collegiate universe. Caine pinpoints the wisdom that can be salvaged from this wreck of a man.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Anthony Lane, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

THE ADVENTURES OF HUCK FINN—Disney puts Twain through the Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah treatment. The writer-director, Stephen Sommers, gives even the roughest issue—Huck's ambivalence toward helping his runaway slave pal, Jim—a clear, smooth complexion. Although it retains a couple of violent episodes, the film has been aimed at the very young, starting with the central casting of eleven-year-old Elijah Wood. He's a child stuck in an adolescent's job. Courtney B. Vance does a wary, intelligent Jim, Robbie Coltrane and Jason Robards are engagingly hammy as the Duke and the King, and James Gammon brings his humorous growl to a gullible lawman. But Sommers keeps the action on one level, as if he feared that "Sesame Street" hadn't taught his target audience the word I-R-O-N-Y.—M.S. (Murray Hill Cinemas, 59th Street East Cinema, Orpheum VII, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Metro Cinema. . . . ¶ Village East Cinemas, and Guild; through April 22.)

American Graffiti (1973)—As tasty and fizzy as a cherry-vanilla Coke, and just about as substantial. George Lucas created his first pop phenomenon with this affable, rock-drenched memory of small-town teen life in 1962. Lucas reintroduced baby boomers to the pleasures of fifties youth culture; he connected with their yearning for "more innocent times." Nostalgia soon flooded Hollywood. The movie's in-and-out vignette style became a youth-movie cliché. Some of its characters—the nerd, the dumb blonde, the hot-rodder—were already clichés in 1962. But Lucas's peppy direction puts it over nonetheless, thanks in part to an extraordinary cast: Richard Dreyfuss, Ron Howard, Cindy Williams, Paul Le Mat, Charlie Martin Smith, Candy Clark, Mackenzie Phillips, Bo Hopkins, Wolfman Jack (as himself), and, in smaller roles, Harrison Ford, Suzanne Somers, Joe Spano, and Kathleen Quinlan. Lucas wrote the script with Gloria Katz and Willard Huyck; Francis Ford Coppola and Gary Kurtz produced; Haskell Wexler was the supervising cameraman.—M.S. (American Museum of the Moving Image; April 24.)

Bodies, Rest & Motion—Michael Steinberg's movie is set in the Southwestern town of Enfield. A young, unloving couple called Nick (Tim Roth) and Beth (Bridget Fonda) are about to leave town; instead, they leave each other. Nick drives off into the desert, thirsting vainly for his roots, while Beth stays home and goes to bed with a housepainter, Sid (Eric Stoltz). Why she should do this is anyone's guess; but then private motivation, like much else about the film, seems arbitrary and floating. Steinberg wants to tell a tale of boredom, of a generation almost too cool to make decisions, and it's no surprise that his movie should fall prey to the same failings; as time passes, and as Stoltz's character labors us with dud hippie mantras, it becomes hard to care what happens to these people. Tim Roth survives by the sheer prickly push of personality, and Phoebe Cates has some upbeat moments as his ex-girlfriend, but it's a struggle all the way. The camera follows suit; the crisp, sunbaked images of the first half hour promise a clarity that slowly blurs and fades.—A.L. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/12/93.) (Village East Cinemas, and 57th St. Playhouse.)

The Crush—No thrills—not even sleazy ones. The producers must have found the high concept irresistible: "Fatal Attraction" meets "Lolita." But did they ever read the script? Cary Elwes plays a magazine writer who is flattered and then victimized by his landlord's infatuated fourteen-year-old daughter (Alicia Silverstone). The writer-director, Alan Shapiro, hasn't given his cast a single original line, and the plot has fewer twists than Silverstone has curves. With Jennifer Rubin and Kurtwood Smith.—M.S. (Village Theatre VII, Gemini, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ 84th Street Sixplex; through April 22.)

The Crying Game—This amazing movie by the Irish writer and director Neil Jordan ("Mona Lisa," "The Miracle") has the sure grip and the unstoppable momentum of a dream. Jordan tells the story of Fergus (Stephen Rea), a troubled I.R.A. gunman who undergoes a thorough emotional metamorphosis, and he makes the hero's change of heart moving and persuasive; the film inspires an irrational sort of trust, a willing suspension of something deeper and more fundamental than disbelief. The picture is a splendid entertainment—an elating, charmed sprint through all sorts of contemporary terrors. Also with Forest Whitaker, Miranda Richardson, Jim Broadbent, Adrian Dunbar, and newcomer Jaye Davidson, who is astonishing.—T.R. (11/16/92) (Angelika Film Center, Sutton, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Criterion Center.)

Electra (1962)—The Greek director Michael Cacoyannis has filmed his own adaptation of the Euripides tragedy in an outdoor setting, with an authentic solemn grandeur, and with the handsome young Irene Papas as his heroine. Still, trying to show how vividly modern this classic is, he produces discomfort: we're neither

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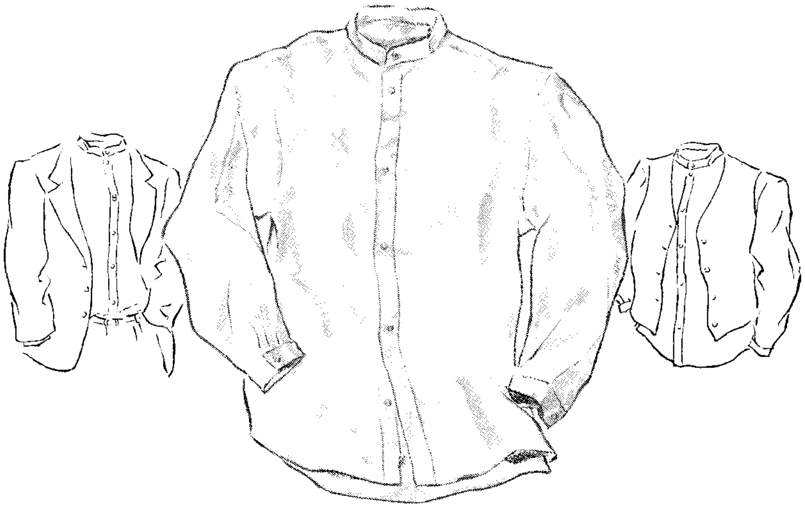

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quite here nor quite back there. With Aleka Catselli as Clytemnestra, Yannis Fertis as Orestes, and Manos Katrakis as the tutor. Cinematography by Walter Lassally; music by Mikis Theodorakis. In Greek.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; April 24.)

Groundhog Day—An above-average Bill Murray vehicle, directed by Harold Ramis from a script by Ramis and Danny Rubin. The star plays Phil Connors, a burned-out TV weatherman who wakes up one morning to discover that he's stuck in time—condemned to relive, endlessly, Groundhog Day in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. The picture goes on a little too long, but Murray's inventiveness keeps it lively even during its less inspired stretches. The fundamental, deliberate monotony of the conception actually serves to highlight his skill at comic riffing. The movie feels like a spontaneous one-man jam session, and you sense that Murray can play all night, just for the fun of finding out what else he might come up with. He fools around as if there were no tomorrow.—T.R. (2/22/93) (Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Indecent Proposal—With Robert Redford, Demi Moore, and Woody Harrelson; directed by Adrian Lyne. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, East 85th Street, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza.)

Indochine—The director, Régis Wargnier, uses his star, Catherine Deneuve, largely for her classical, indomitable profile—the same attribute that made her the 1985 model for the French national symbol, "Marianne." Indeed, in this wannabe epic about the waning of French Indochina, Wargnier reduces all his actors and characters to symbols: Deneuve, as a French plantation owner who's lived in Indochina all her life and carries on the spirit of pioneer colonialism; lovely Linh Dan Pham, as Deneuve's adopted daughter, an Annamese princess who becomes a revolutionary leader; and blank Vincent Perez, as a confused French naval officer who wows both mother and child, sparking romance and rebellion. This monument-like picture lacks urgency and staying power—the material oxidizes onscreen. With vistas by cinematographer François Catonné that should increase the tourist traffic in Vietnam and Malaysia. In French.—M.S. (Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Just Another Girl on the I.R.T—The heroine of Leslie Harris's début feature is a black inner-city teen-ager named Chantel (Ariyan Johnson), and the film means to demonstrate that kids like her can't be reduced to a stereotype. But after the opening sequence, which is edited to the hip-hop rhythm of a number by the female rappers Nikki D and Cee Asia, the movie starts to go wrong. As a storyteller, Harris moves to the beat of the same old drummer which usually sets the tempo for earnest low-budget independent movies; she leads the heroine, and the audience, on a forced march from lesson to lesson. Chantel is less a person than a counter-stereotype, and Harris uses her according to the didactic need of the moment. The filmmaker's eye for the nuances of behavior isn't sharp, and scene after scene is ruined by faulty observation; Harris is in such a hurry to get through the lesson plan that she garbles messages that shouldn't be difficult to put across clearly and forcefully. (The messages that do come through aren't always welcome; a classroom sequence in which Chantel argues with her Jewish history teacher is unmistakably anti-Semitic.)—T.R. (3/22/93) (Village Theatre VII, Orpheum VII, and Criterion Center.)

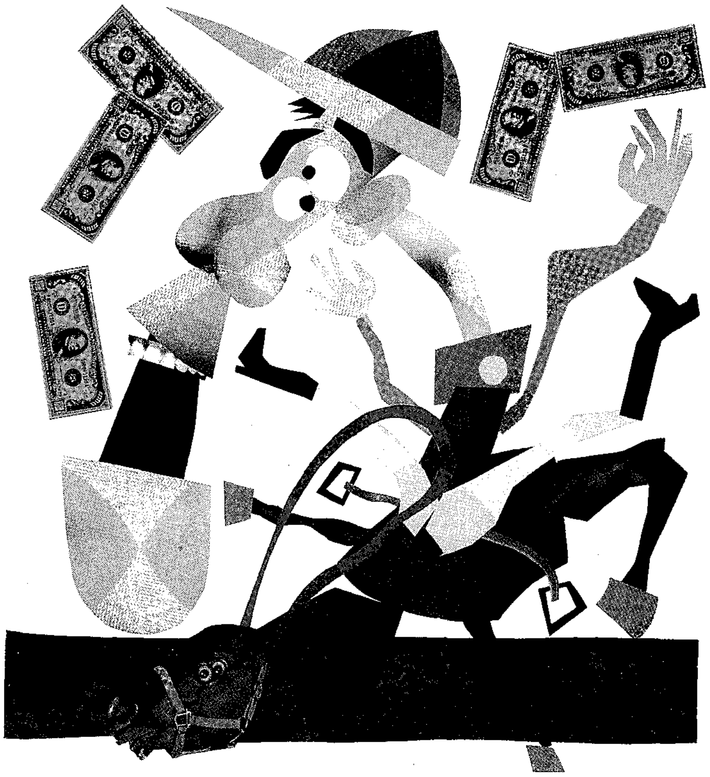
The Last Days of Chez Nous—In a ramshackle Sydney household, an Australian family gets on with its life, but only just. Beth (Lisa Harrow) starts to lose her French husband, J.P. (Bruno Ganz), to the attentions of her sister Vicki (Kerry Fox); meanwhile, her daughter Annie (Miranda Otto) is falling quietly for Tim (Kiri Paramore), their lodger with the crewcut and the sense of humor. Gillian Armstrong's new movie is a worthy successor to "My Brilliant Career" and "High Tide"; if anything, it feels even more mobile, charting every shift in the emotional climate. It's hard to pin down just what kind of work it is: jokes at the dinner table can turn nasty and upsetting, but people also recover quickly, and sometimes dance without warning. It's a true ensemble movie: none of the performances are vain or showy—Harrow in particular braves all manner of self-exposure, so we can see the fear beneath her strength. This fluent, hopeful comedy (and it is a comedy, for all the encroachments of sadness) is Armstrong's best movie to date.—A.L. (3/1/93) (Village East Cinemas, and 68th St. Playhouse.)

Léolo—Weird but none too wonderful. Jean-Claude Lauzon's film is set partly in Montreal and partly inside the bustling imagination of its hero. Léolo (Maxime Collin) is a young boy who thinks, quite mistakenly, that he's Italian—a fairly mild delusion by the standard of his family, most of whom are crazy about bodily functions and heading straight for the asylum. You see Grandfather having his toenails clipped by the teeth of a young girl, and Léolo himself attending the ritual rape of a cat, but you don't even bother to be repelled; this is Believe It or Not cinema, and the answer is mostly Not. Lauzon's reckless fancy doesn't have anything to brace against, to spring off from: he tires you out by trying too hard to shock you. Worst of all, he lathers the images with extra voice-over, just in case you don't get what's going on. That smacks of cowardice; as Buñuel showed long ago, the first duty of a good Surrealist is to have the courage of his own convictions. In French.—A.L. (4/12/93) (Angelika Film Center, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

El Mariachi—This first film by twenty-four-year-old Robert Rodriguez was made for seven thousand dollars, and part of its enormous charm is that it really looks like a seven-thousand-dollar movie. It's a grubby little thriller, set in a Mexican border town, about a wandering mariachi musician (Carlos Gallardo) who is mistaken for a killer. Rodriguez establishes a delirious pace, and keeps the bullets flying and the corpses crumpling for a brisk, and appropriately terse, eighty-two minutes. The movie has the sort of dry, bracingly unwholesome humor that relentless mayhem can produce if the characters are mean and abject enough and the storytelling is speedy and laconic. This young filmmaker is no visual wizard; he's just an energetic and imaginative manipulator of tried-and-true genre conventions. But if you enter his seedy world with expectations as low as the picture's aspirations, you'll probably have a very good time. In Spanish.—T.R. (2/22/93) (Village Theatre VII, and Angelika 57.)

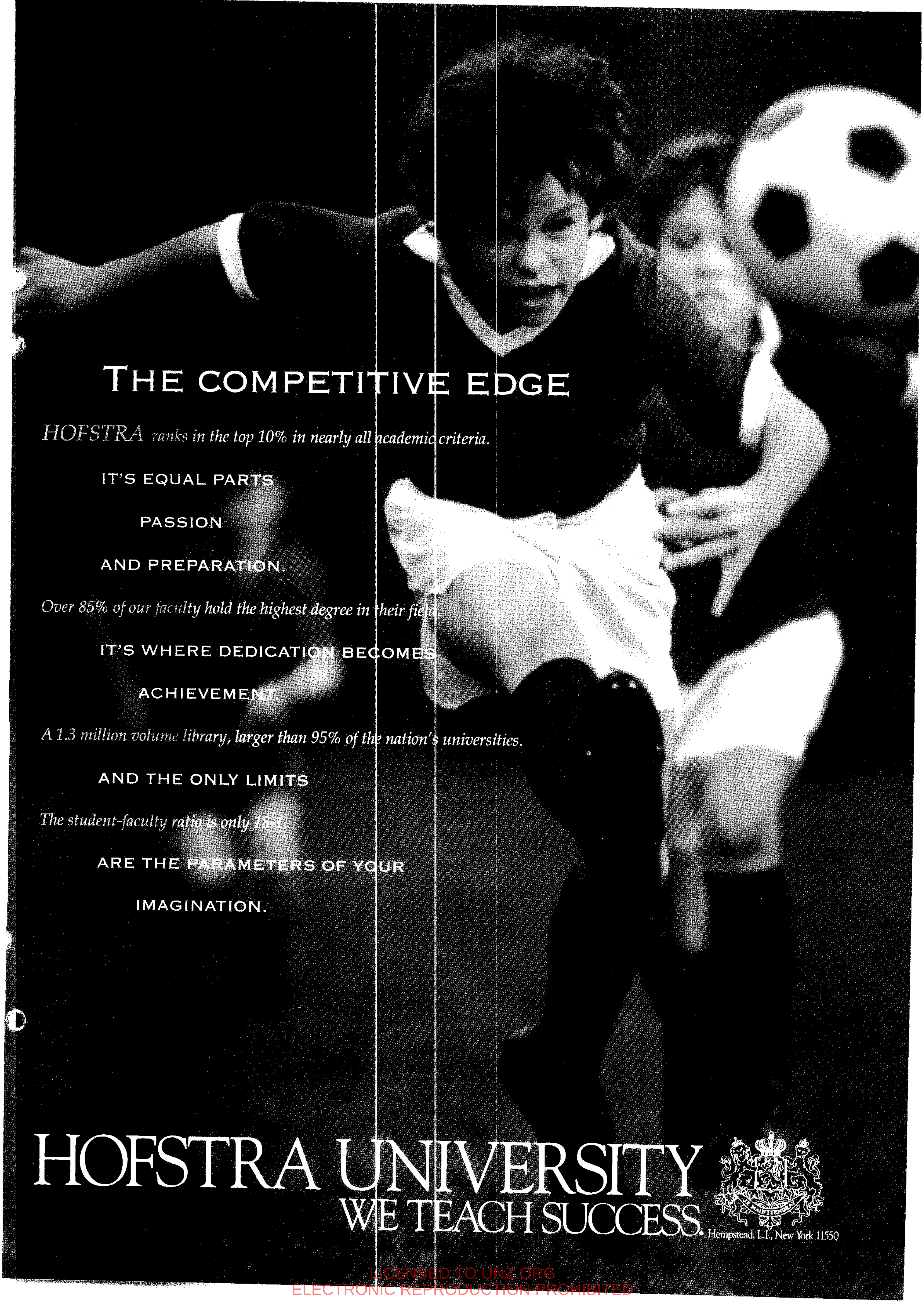
Matewan (1987)—This true story of a bitter, courageous strike by West Virginia coal miners in 1920 is almost stirring enough to survive the primitive and ponderous movie technique of its writer-director, John Sayles. The film aims for the simplicity and emotional purity of folk music—an effect that, in movies, is not so simply achieved. You shouldn't make a picture about the labor movement if you don't know how to give life to crowd scenes, or one that ends with a massacre if you lack the skill to render complex action lucid and comprehensible. Sayles' deficiencies as a filmmaker don't seem to be the products of smugness and arrogance, but (like Bruce Springsteen, for whom he has directed several music videos) he may be taking his populist, blue-collar aesthetic a bit too far: hard work and decent feeling, even in the service of a great subject, aren't always enough. "Matewan"—rousing as it sometimes is—would be a more convincing, even a purer, tribute to American labor if its honest sweat and blood were adulterated with more of an artist's cunning. With Chris Cooper, Will Oldham, David Strathairn, Kevin Tighe, Mary McDonnell, and James Earl Jones. Photographed by Haskell Wexler in the Left-lyrical style of his earlier work on "Bound for Glory."—T.R. (American Museum of the Moving Image; April 25.)

On the Avenue (1937)—One of the best of the Twentieth Century Fox musicals of the thirties, despite its unevenness and lack of sophistication. If it had nothing else, it might still be worth seeing for Alice Faye singing the memorable "This Year's Kisses," and it has a lot more: Dick Powell in ebullient voice, the Ritz Brothers doing a parody number, and a first-rate Irving Berlin score that includes "I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm," "Slumming on Park Avenue," and "You're Laughing at Me." The love interest involves ever-beautiful, ever-coy Madeleine Carroll, who gurgles when she means to talk, but the director, Roy Del Ruth, doesn't linger on her. He does, blessedly, linger on Harry Ritz, and when this great manic vaudevillian puts on drag and does an imitation of Alice Fay, or when he exercises his eyeballs, you can just barely gasp "Dada." With John Davis, George Barbier, Cora Witherspoon, Walter Catlett, E. E. Clive, Alan Mowbray, and Billy Gilbert. Written by Gene Markey (who was also the producer) and William Conselman; choreography by Seymour Felix.—P.K. (Gramercy; starting April 27.)



At Film Forum 2, Jerry Lewis in "Money from Home."

STEPHEN KRONINGER



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IN BRIEF-Cont'd

Passion Fish—Eighteen years ago, John Sayles might have boiled down this back-to-basics portrait of a paralyzed, bitter white soap star (Mary McDonnell) and her strong-willed black caretaker (Alfre Woodard) into a twenty-page short story. But as a movie writer-director-editor, he lets himself gas on about it for two and a quarter hours. Sayles has an ear for regional accents and colloquial dialogue, and an eye for quotidian details. But he's better on nuts and bolts than he is on heart and soul. Sayles predictably alternates scenes of rehab drama and female friendship with comic relief and local (Louisiana) color. Only David Strathairn and Vondie Curtis-Hall cut through the monotony as the heroines' earthy admirers. Those who've seen Sayles' bit in "Matinee" promoting the ant-man horror movie "Mant" might hope that the title creatures in this film will turn out to be imaginative hybrids, too. No such luck—they're simply little fishies attached to big metaphors.—M.S. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Chelsea Cinemas, and Festival.)

Point of No Return—John Badham remakes Luc Besson's chic Eurostinker, "La Femme Nikita" (1991), as a big, square, stupid American action movie. It's a slight improvement, but so what? Return to sender. With Bridget Fonda, Gabriel Byrne, Anne Bancroft, Dermot Mulroney, and Harvey Keitel.—T.R. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, Gemini, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

The Sandlot—With nine prepubescent kids doing shtick, one drooling mammoth dog, a voice-over soaked in early-sixties nostalgia, and the message that baseball brings fathers and sons together, this movie is an unholy pastiche of "The Bad News Bears," "Beethoven," "The Wonder Years," and "Field of Dreams." The director, David Mickey Evans, takes an old plot—about the new boy in town who finds himself when he joins a sandlot baseball team—and tries to make it mythic through hyperbole. There's a snappy change-of-pace gag involving a little guy and a nubile lifeguard, but the screams and barks and fraudulent emotions grow wearying.—M.S. (Baronet, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

Scent of a Woman—Director Martin Brest and screenwriter Bo Goldman labor mightily to design a holiday-season heart-warmer about a middle-aged blind man and a troubled teen-ager (Chris O'Donnell), but fortunately their low intentions are undone by the star, Al Pacino, whose performance taps emotions too complex and too frightening to be resolved by the simple moral victory that ends the picture. His Frank Slade, a retired Army officer and former aide to L.B.J., is a bitter, misanthropic, profoundly depressed man, and the actor makes us feel the full weight of the character's hopelessness. This is acting that chills the heart beyond any possibility of warming. The filmmakers may dismiss the audience with a banal lesson written on the blackboard—"Smell the roses" is the gist—but by the end we're not paying much attention. We're still sorting out the ambiguities and uncomfortable truths that Pacino's great performance has let us in on.—T.R. (12/28/92-1/4/93) (Bay Cinema, First & 62nd Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Regency.)

Stella (1956)—Young men dance in a row in the sunlight and a solemn, solitary man dances in front of a high-pitched, almost metallic bouzouki orchestra. The streets and bistros of Athens are much more memorable than the story of this crude, vigorous Greek film, written and directed by Michael Cacoyannis. The story is rather like "Camille" crossed with "Carmen"—an overcharged melodrama about a fiery young woman (the leonine Melina Mercouri) and her uncompromising determination to be emotionally independent of her lovers. She refuses to marry the weak, insomniac aristocrat (Aleko Alexandrakis), outrages his condescending relatives, and drives him to his death; she falls in love with a young peasant athlete (Georges Foundas), but she stands him up at the altar, and he kills her. This movie doesn't have the grace of Cacoyannis's later, more subdued "A Girl in Black," but it's a triumph of temperament. Cinematography by Costa Theodorides. In Greek.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; April 23.)

The Story of Qiu Ju—Directed by Zhang Yimou. In Mandarin. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Strictly Ballroom—Baz Luhrmann's first film brings good news: Australian cinema is on the move again, with a vigor not seen since the days of "Mad Max." There's no violence in "Strictly Ballroom"—the general lack of unpleasantness, in fact, is quite unnerving—but the speed of it still leaves you reeling. A young dancer, played by Paul Mercurio, acquires a new partner (Tara Morice), dreams up a flash routine, and sets out to break the Old Guard. The plot is cut-rate melodrama, and Luhrmann knows it; but he never sneers at his hero's ambitions. Besides, there are so many other things to laugh at—the costumes, the minor characters with their major obsessions, the psychedelic makeup, the trashy music. The movie is over before you know it, and is not one to linger in the mind, or indeed pass through the mind at all; but it's a good-humored ride for the senses, never too sickly, and who can say no to that?—A.L. (2/15/93) (Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Carnegie Hall Cinema.)

This Boy's Life—Michael Caton-Jones' absorbing film is based on Tobias Wolff's 1989 memoir of growing up in the fifties. The screenplay, by Robert Getchell (who also wrote "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore"), initially presents teen-age Toby (Leonardo DiCaprio) and his mother, Caroline (Ellen Barkin), as a pair of cheerful road-movie nomads, wandering from town to town and picking their destinations almost randomly.

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KENT BARTON

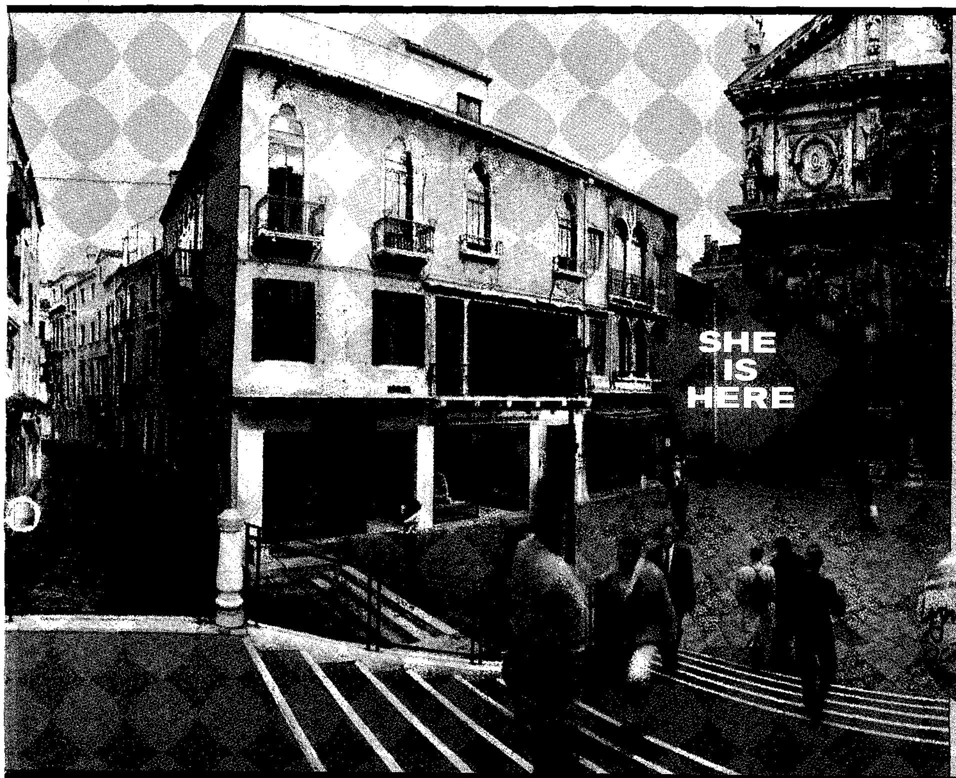
At Theatre 80 St. Marks, Michael Caine in "Alfie."

Their troubles start when Caroline, thinking that Toby needs a father, marries a small-town clod named Dwight (Robert De Niro), who proves to be a bully—the sort of guy who fancies himself king of the castle and takes pleasure in making his subjects bend to his will. Dwight is one-dimensional; we learn everything we need to know about him early on. Fortunately, the movie doesn't stay cooped up in his gloomy castle. And Barkin and DiCaprio are sensational. Every time De Niro threatens to take over the picture, they snatch our attention right back, and always with something casual: a look or a gesture that conveys how thoroughly this mother and son understand each other. Also with Jonah Blechman. Wonderful cinematography by David Watkin.—T.R. (4/19/93) (Village Theatre VII, Tower East, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

Unforgiven—Set in eighteen-eighties Kansas and Wyoming, this engrossing, moody Western is the sixteenth film Clint Eastwood has directed, and by far the best. The canny script, by David Webb Peoples, revives the old story about the retired gunfighter (Eastwood) who picks up his firearms again for one last score. But there's no easy resolution, and the movie is stronger because of its loose ends: the filmmakers acknowledge that the bloody chaos of an outlaw's life can't be settled in two hours and eleven minutes. The action begins when a cowboy slashes the face of a prostitute, and her co-workers pool their money to offer a reward for the murder of him and his partner. Jaimz Woolvett is the upstart who enlists Eastwood in the bounty hunt. Morgan Freeman plays Eastwood's longtime partner, Gene Hackman a megalomaniac sheriff, Richard Harris a flamboyant English gunslinger, and Saul Rubinek a dime novelist. This is the finest set of performances ever to grace a Clint Eastwood movie, and this time Eastwood even does a good job directing Eastwood. Every bullet in this movie matters; under its leathery hide is a genuine compulsion to de-romanticize Western gunfighting.—M.S. (8/10/92) (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Beekman, 86th Street East Twin, and Columbus Circle.)

Visions of Light: The Art of Cinematography—This documentary, directed by Arnold Glassman, Todd McCarthy, and Stuart Samuels, is much more fun than its college-catalogue title suggests. The movie is cheery, convivial, and swift: for ninety minutes, stunning images, drawn from all eras of movie history, pass before us, and we listen to a couple of dozen veteran cinematographers speaking about what they do. The craftsmen are a likable and unpretentious bunch, and it's easy to share their delight in the achievements of their colleagues and masters: the film is a joy to look at. (The clips are taken from the best possible prints, and they're all shown in their original aspect ratios.) Movie-lovers can argue with some of the filmmakers' choices—the near total exclusion of images from Westerns is the most serious flaw—but, in a strange way, that's part of the picture's charm. It has the power to revive senses that have been dulled by the crushing predictability of recent movies. The cinematographers interviewed include Allen Daviau, Caleb Deschanel, Haskell Wexler, John Bailey, and the late Nestor Almendros (to whom the film is dedicated).—T.R. (4/5/93) (Film Forum.)

Wide Sargasso Sea—John Duigan's adaptation of Jean Rhys's strange and memorable 1966 novel is set in the West Indies of the mid-nineteenth century, and an air of thick tropical sensuality pervades the movie's imagery. The hero, a young Englishman named Edward Rochester (Nathaniel Parker), arrives in Jamaica sick with fever after his long ocean passage; his stay on the island, during which he marries a ravishing Creole heiress named Antoinette Cosway (Karina Lombard), is a blur of heightened perception and disordered reason. As the marriage goes bad, events take on a nightmarish inevitability, as if they were moving toward a preordained end. They are: the hero of this picture is the younger self of the Rochester that Charlotte Brontë created in "Jane Eyre," the brooding landowner who kept his mad wife locked up in his English estate house; and Antoinette is the young woman who became his prisoner and his shameful secret. Duigan and his cinematographer, Geoff Burton, merge the luxuriant erotic tension of a tropical idyll with the clammy apprehension of gothic fiction. And the film is so serenely paced and so envelopingly lovely to watch that you may not realize until the end that it is, in the deepest sense, a horror movie—an intimate portrayal of the relationship between a monster and his victim. Also with Claudia Robinson, Rowena King, Rachel Ward, and Michael York. Stewart Copeland's score is superb.—T.R. (4/19/93) (Cinema I.)



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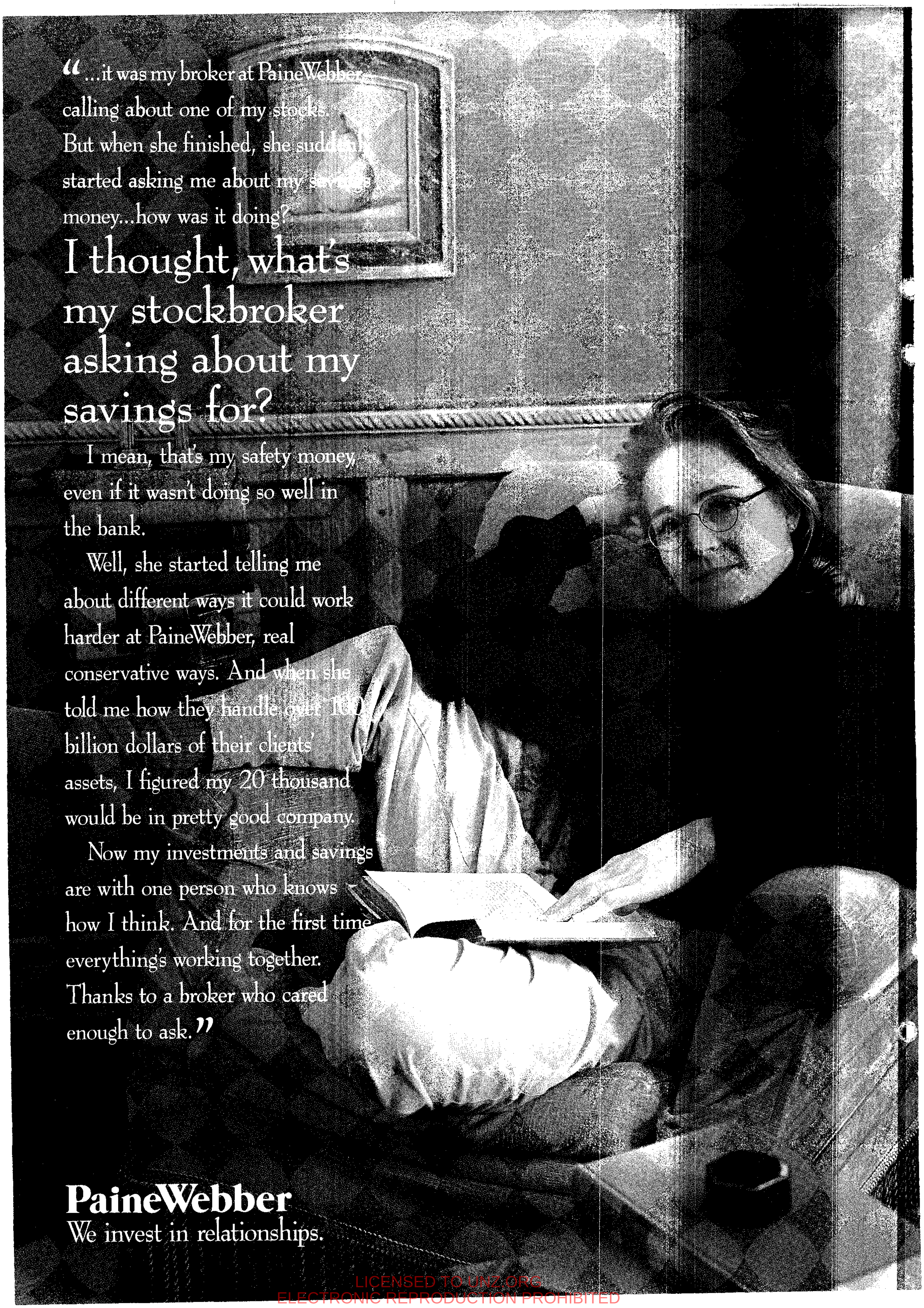

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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

NOBODY'S MADONNA

Gloria Trevi. La Trevi. *La Atrevida* (the Fearlessly Impudent One). Twenty-three years old, maybe a year or two younger, or older—she doesn't say. Gloria Trevi is a rock star and songwriter, a television and movie star (her movies, "Pelo Suelto" and "Zapatos Viejos," broke every Mexican box-office record), and a pinup-calendar girl. For two years in a row, Gloria Trevi's calendars have burst onto the Mexican landscape like a gaudy perennial, blossoming at every newspaper kiosk, selling in the zillions—every teen-age boy must buy one, along with *almost* every teen-age girl, every self-respecting with-it intellectual, and almost everyone else, except La Trevi's grandmother—until, a few weeks later, they've vanished, completely sold out, and the kiosks have had to go back to selling wrestling magazines.

Gloria Trevi *will* say that she grew up in a middle-class family in Monterrey, which is northern Mexico's major industrial city—a family consisting of her divorced mother, a grandmother, and a great-grandmother. And that when she was sixteen she ran away to Mexico City with her boyfriend, sang for money on its buses and in its metro, and put on what she calls a "sad-eyed little sheep-face" to beg for tacos at taco stands. And that she split up with her boyfriend, and she still hasn't quite got over it. Again and again, her conversation returns to this subject, the two ill-fated great loves of her young life—two boyfriends. And there are only two: "In my life, in *all* my life, only two, though I know no one believes it, because they think I'm, *así, muy reventada*"—a phrase that means something like very passionately promiscuous. Gloria Trevi's often stated ambition is to be Mexico's first female President.

La Trevi is definitely her country's, and probably Latin America's, biggest pop star. She is also Mexico's first true late-twentieth-century-style famous person: famous for being La Trevi, seemingly self-invented, larger than life, brash and sexy, vulgar and smart, innocent and ironic, spontaneous and calculating, a feminist and a tart, et cetera. She likes to answer the most obviously tiresome question put to her by saying that, if anything, Madonna is the Trevi of the United States. But she dislikes the comparison: "I'm Latin. We're *not* the same age. She's a *great* businesswoman."

On a Monday afternoon in March, in a Manhattan hotel suite, Gloria is wearing a toreador's embroidered gold lamé jacket—the same one she wore in the November, 1992, calendar shot, where it was practically all she wore. Today, it's mostly buttoned up, and with it she is wearing faded, extravagantly torn jeans and scuffed white cowboy boots. She is sitting cross-legged on the arm of a couch, and her hair, very long and reddish-brown, is baroquely falling, flowing, unfurling around her shoulders. La Trevi waves her arms when she talks; her frequent laughter is cheerfully raucous. Sometimes she chews her nails.

"Yesterday, I had a show at one in the morning, in Veracruz," she explains, in Spanish. "At three in the morning, I was finishing it. At three-thirty, I was on a plane to Mexico City. At five-thirty, I was there, and at six-thirty I flew to New York, changing planes in Houston. I landed here in New York, and from the airport *directito* they took me to the theatre, I got out of the limousine, I went in running, and ran right out onstage. That was yesterday." It was a Sunday-afternoon show at the Paramount. Many of La Trevi's fans, here in *La Gran Manzana*, are adolescent girls, and Latina.

Today's schedule has, so far, included a visit to the "Entertainment Tonight" studios to film a spot and a stop at MTV, where, on camera, she tore the shirt off a male technician and showed off her tassel-fringed neon-green bustier with the rubber face of a doll over each breast: "*un güero y un negrito*" (one white and one black)—her "anti-racist" message.

"My grandmother doesn't like

CHRIS CURRY

what I do," Gloria Trevi says. "She doesn't like my calendars. She's *la Jefa* of Our Ladies of Charity and Good Manners and Perpetual Mourning of all Mexico. So it's typical that she went hysterical when she saw me on television for the first time. She wrote a letter to the newspaper saying, '*Hijita*, what are you doing with your life? I beg God to pardon you. Why do you dress like a *mujerzuela*? Why do you speak of "satisfaction" when you have no way of knowing what that is?' She wanted to put across the notion that I was a virgin. *Yo!*

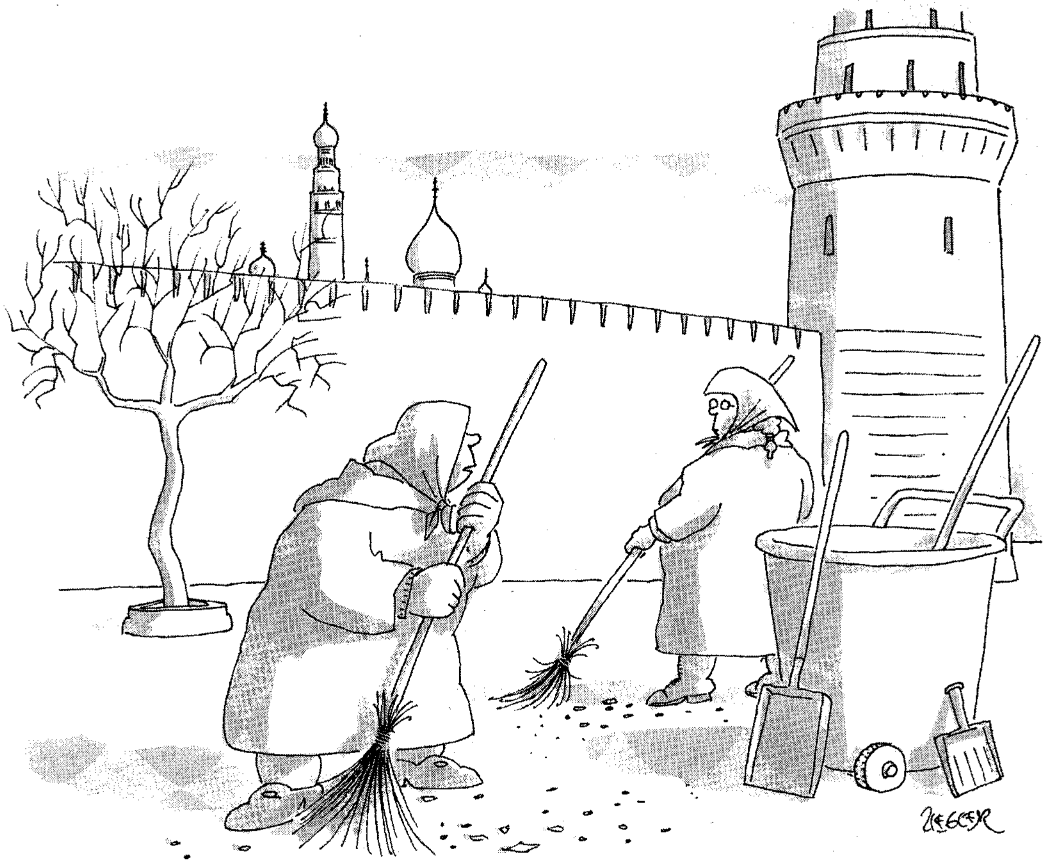
"Intellectuals have got a lot of mileage out of calling me some kind of cultural-sociological phenomenon. When they say that, I feel like a cow with six legs—like some rare thing. Because I feel I'm just a normal girl. When I compose my songs, I write about the most obvious things in the world. All the performers used to sing, '*Amor mío, te quiero mucho*,' and so you say, 'I know we all love love, but there's more to life. There's poverty, family problems, the desire to leave home, school . . . '

"During my shows, I like to call men up from the audience. I like to see men in the position of women. To see their faces when I tear off their shirts, make them lie down on the stage. Now it's the man who's on the bottom! I, a woman, undress the man! I, a woman, seduce and trap them! Sometimes I take off their belts and whip them. *Sí!* The way they often hit women. I believe that the next time they're with their girls they'll be sweeter, more romantic, because now they know how girls feel. Also, it's fun for the girls in the audience—they get an eyeball taco. Which is to say, they get a good look at the boy I've left without his clothes."

THE LAW'S DELAYS

GOVERNOR CUOMO'S decision to exclude himself from consideration for the Supreme Court took many people by surprise, not least because he has often said how much he enjoys the intellectual challenges of the law. But his experience of law practice so far has not been wholly pleasurable, partly because, as he said in a telephone conversation last week, the business side of the law has never appealed to him. "I was not the kind of lawyer who measured my fees every day," he explained. But perhaps he should have been, because now—nearly two decades after he left the law for the world of politics—he remains involved in a dispute about the legal fees of his old firm. If there is a skeleton here, it is not, to be sure, in Mr. Cuomo's closet but, rather, in that of the legal system, which has allowed this fairly routine quarrel to stretch to such interminable length. The case has been covered episodically in newspapers over the years, most thoroughly in 1985, but it still hasn't been resolved.

From 1963 to 1974, Mr. Cuomo was a partner in a firm then known as Corner, Finn, Cuomo & Charles, which occupied a modest suite of offices on the nineteenth floor of a building on Brooklyn's Court Street. Mr. Cuomo represented a variety of clients, including several construction companies, and late in 1973 he recruited an associate named Michael Nicholson to help him with the construction cases. Soon after Mr. Nicholson arrived at the firm, Mr. Cuomo left—first to make an unsuccessful run for lieutenant governor and then, in January of 1975, to become New York's Secretary of State. Mr. Cuomo accepted a hundred-thousand-dollar settlement from his partners in return for his interest in the firm; he was to receive a lump sum of twenty thousand dollars immediately, with the balance to be paid in installments of three hundred dollars a week. To protect him against the risk of possible default, the firm took out a seventy-five-thousand-dollar insurance policy on the life of Peter Dwyer, the lawyer who was then effectively the head of the firm.



"Ralph Lauren says that, come fall, the Russian look will be huge."

On December 3, 1978, Mr. Dwyer died in an automobile accident. Mr. Cuomo was promptly paid the balance of his hundred thousand dollars from the insurance money (it came to thirty-four thousand seven hundred and twenty-two dollars), but the firm and Mr. Dwyer's estate became enmeshed in a lawsuit over who was entitled to the balance of the policy. In an affidavit in the case, Mr. Cuomo said that his share of the insurance proceeds had "represented the unpaid balance of my interest in the law firm at that time."

Then, suddenly, the firm received a windfall of almost a million dollars in the form of a contingency fee in a case on behalf of Perini North River Associates, a client that had been brought to the firm by Mr. Cuomo. Mr. Cuomo decided he was entitled to share in it. In September of 1980, he wrote to a lawyer for Perini, saying, "Whatever writings have been entered into and whatever transactions between me and the firm, none of them properly foreclosed my right to participate in the Perini fee."

Why had he changed his mind?

"Signing the affidavit was a very dumb thing for me to do," Mr. Cuomo said in last week's telephone conversation. "I really didn't know how much I was owed by the firm. All I wanted to do was help the widow Dwyer get her share. Why would I give up millions of dollars in fees in return for a hundred thousand dollars? It makes no sense."

By 1980, Michael Nicholson's wife, Diana, had joined him in the firm, and they asked a court to declare that Mr. Cuomo had no right to the Perini fee. In response, Mr. Cuomo countersued for a portion of this fee, and, in addition, for a share of the income from several other clients he had worked with at the firm. "My theory was that there had been a mutual mistake of fact—neither of us knew all the facts when I left the firm," Mr. Cuomo said. "I could not have signed that affidavit with any real knowledge of what the prospects for future fees really were."

The Governor went on to say, "You know what the real question is here? The real question is: Why was this man"—he was referring to himself—"willing to give up a career where you can make so much money to go into public service? You can say that this man was too cavalier with his family's interest. All there is here is a guy who had millions of dollars available to him and decided to go into public service instead. I hope Matilda never hears this, because she'll be very angry with me for giving it all up."

The suit dragged on for nine years in the Brooklyn courts, and it came to trial in 1989. "The week before we were going to call Cuomo to the stand, his lawyer said they wanted to settle, and he gave us a general release," Mr. Nicholson said recently. "He said he didn't want the fees from us after all."

Mr. Cuomo, who, of course, had been governor since 1983, explained, "The lawsuit just became so unwieldy that I dropped out of it." But the story did not end there, because the lawsuit continued between the Nicholsons and Mr. Dwyer's heirs. And Mr. Cuomo came to an agreement with Mr. Dwyer's estate under which he would receive a part of any money it might recover from the Nicholsons. Mr. Cuomo and his lawyer, Peter Johnson, Jr., last week declined to disclose the terms of their agreement with the Dwyers.

Finally, in 1991, the judge ruled that Mr. Dwyer's estate was entitled to the lion's share of the fees—not only the Perini money but also the fees of several of the other clients Mr. Cuomo had serviced. With compound interest included, the Nicholsons were directed to pay Mr. Dwyer's estate nearly five million dollars. That decision, however, is now on appeal. The Governor's former firm now appears to be feeling the strain of all this litigation. Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson are the only lawyers still working there, surrounded by fraying carpets and wallpaper held in place with Scotch Tape. And neither Mr. Dwyer's estate nor the Governor himself has yet seen a penny of the disputed fees.

ON TWO FEET

WHO are we? Where did we come from? And when, to the extent that we have done so, did we become human? In dioramas, holograms, and interactive videos in a new hall at the American Museum of Natural History, the earth's oldest mystery story is told as a strange docudrama based on findings from fossil pits and gene labs, with plenty of wild speculation thrown in for narrative coherence.

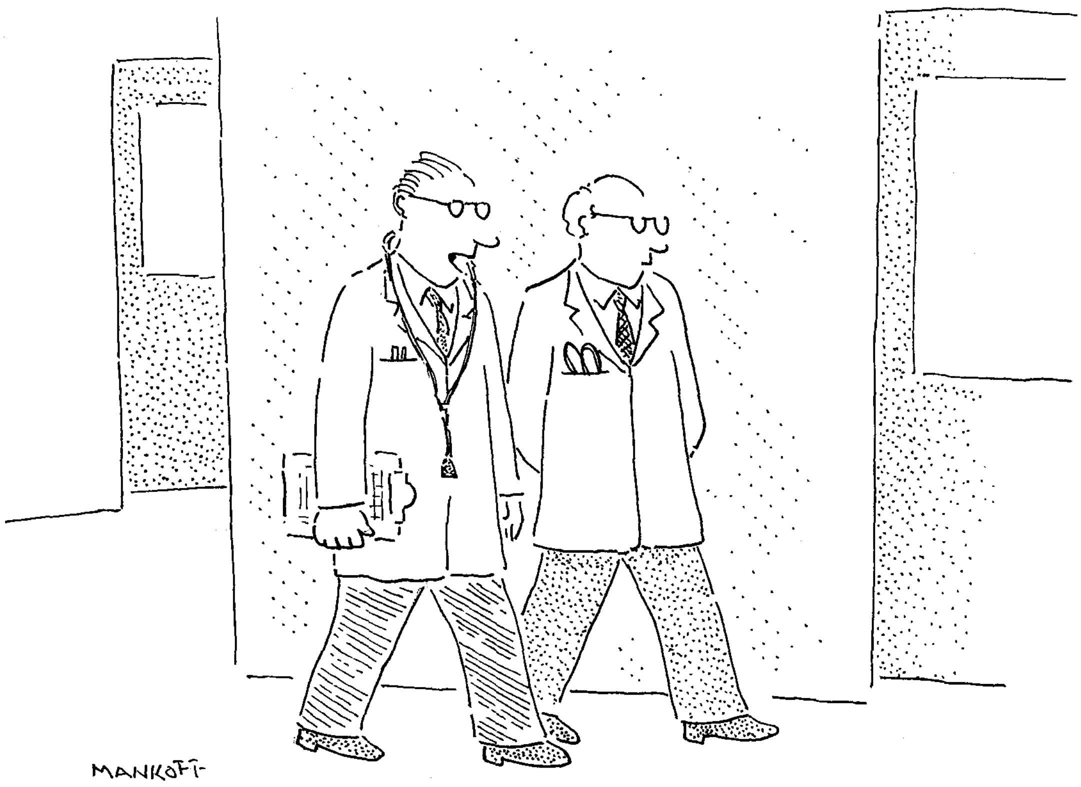
"Neanderthal eyebrows, for instance," said Ian Tattersall, who is the exhibit curator, the chairman of the department of anthropology, and the proud eponym of a species of lemur—*Propithecus tattersalli*—which he happened to snap a picture of on a trip to Madagascar in 1974. "Did Neanderthals have eyebrows? Chimpanzees don't have eyebrows. If Neanderthals had them, where were they? You have to make decisions about things you know nothing about."

The new Hall of Human Biology and Evolution cost six million seven hundred thousand dollars and was nine years in the making. The first third of the hall is devoted to the biochemistry of life and the human body, the second to the story of human origins, and the third (with a replica of the Altamira cave-roof paintings) to the mysterious surge of creativity that brought art and self-consciousness into the world at the end of the last ice age.

Since the early sixties, the story of evolution has been vivified with startling new discoveries and new techniques, such as potassium-argon dating. The age of what we would call early human beings has been pushed back from less than two million years to more than four million, even as the idea of what it means to be "human" has been invested with ambiguity. The gradualistic scenario in which people emerged over millions of years of incremental change, through slow transformation from one creature into another, has been supplanted by a view that emphasizes the diversity of extinct bipeds, all cousins of present human beings.

"Now we've realized that the story of human evolution has not been a straight line," Mr. Tattersall said. "Two million years ago, there were at least four species of human beings. All of them—and all mammals—were once little shrewlike creatures snuffling around on the forest floor, never being able to strut their stuff until the dinosaurs were extinct, at which point they had a chance to diversify. We were only one of an infinite number of outcomes."

The heart of the hall is four new full-scale dioramas. One of them dramatizes two sets of footprints found in 1978 in Laetoli, Tanzania, which were presumably left by a pair of *Australopithecus afarensis*—human beings' earliest relative—walking across a plain of volcanic ash. "I think they are the most evocative and lifelike representations of extinct human beings I've ever seen," Mr. Tat-



"I have no objection to alternative medicine so long as traditional medical fees are scrupulously maintained."

• •

tersall said. "The pose is conjectural, but we know that there were two figures and that they were walking side by side. We don't know whether they were arm in arm. We don't know how the hair on their bodies was distributed. We started off giving the male a mustache, but it made him look a lot like a Lothario from a nineteen-twenties movie." While the constructors of the diorama were coloring in the volcano, and arranging the gray ash, and situating the patchy-haired, bemused figures, Mr. Tattersall was unhappy. He thought that the whole thing looked unreal. And then the artisans sealed the diorama, and suddenly a three-and-a-half-million-year-old gulf in time yawned across a pane of plate glass. "Before the glass goes on, you see the artifice," he said. "After the glass goes on, you see the illusion."

ARKANSAS MAN

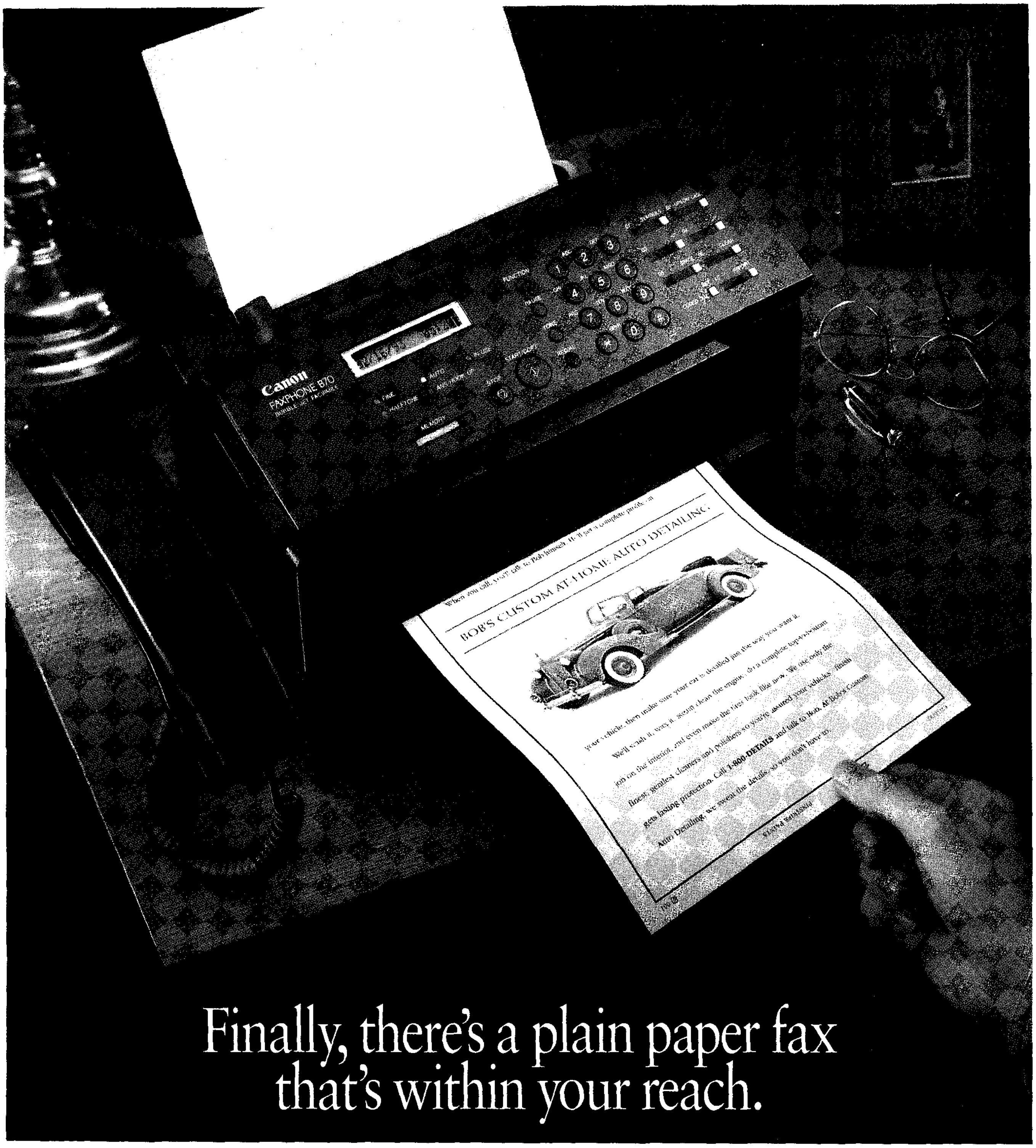
THE senator said he hadn't been to Manhattan in a while, so it was his great pleasure to be back. "It's been a long time!" Senator Fulbright said, sipping some bourbon and looking chipper in a freshly pressed tuxedo. He was at the United Nations, in a long, pink room full of eager young scholars, diplomatic ladies in sequinned gowns, and at least one network anchorman. They were throwing a banquet in his honor and telling him how wonderful he was—an occasion that he said any aged politician would enjoy.

J. William Fulbright, of Arkansas and the United States of America, was eighty-eight on April 9th, and his birthday will be celebrated again next month, at a grand dinner in Washington, to be addressed by the President. The Senator has suffered two strokes, which have limited his walking and softened his memory a little. He sat at a small bar table covered with a white linen cloth, and when he forgot a fact, or a face, he raised his elbows and his face tightened. "I'm so God-damned old," he would say.

Fulbright served five terms in the Senate, and he always had a reputation for being forthright. When he suggested that Harry Truman resign the Presidency, Truman called him "Halfbright," and his old friend Lyndon Johnson revived that name during the Vietnam years. "I liked Lyndon all right. We got along together when we had common interests. I only had trouble with him when he was President." The first Fulbright scholars went to China, in 1948. There have been nearly two hundred thousand of them to date, and they are his proudest achievement. Next is the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, which he decided must be built after watching the Bolshoi Ballet perform at a poky Washington movie house. And an architect from his home town designed it.

Fulbright grinned at the old stories. Squinting through bifocals, he said that Roosevelt was the most impressive President he had seen. "Ike was very nice to me also. He didn't do anything extravagant," he went on, and added that Jimmy Carter stayed aloof. "Maybe I didn't appeal to him," Senator Fulbright said. For over a year now, people have been asking him about Bill Clinton. "I call him a dynamic little fella. He was lively when I first met him—very lively." Before going off to Oxford, Clinton worked for the Senator, clipping newspaper articles on Vietnam and fetching coffee. "Oh, he was genial. He was a good-looking young fella. Still is!"

Photographers flashed pictures of the Senator laughing with his guests and shaking their hands. Even while he was sitting down, you could see he was never a tall man. People passed drinks over his head as the din in the room increased. Bill Irwin, Fulbright '87, came and went, wearing a rhinestone clown on one lapel. Dr. Soji Tomikawa approached, then drew back. He was one of the first Japanese students ever to win a Fulbright, he said. The ruffles of his dress shirt were edged with blue, and he carried a small camera. He just stared at the smiling old man. "Thank you to Mr. Fulbright," he finally said, "the greatest hero in Washington." ♦



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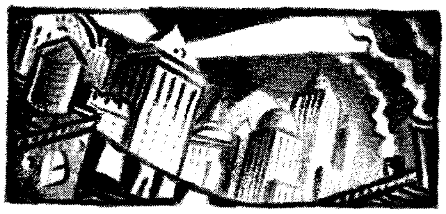
AROUND CITY HALL

CRY THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

Ethnicity is the political trump card, but, while Washington jumps to the challenge, New York could use some new solutions.

BY ANDY LOGAN


MICHAEL SLOAN

On the fourth of this month, which was the twenty-fifth anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., Mayor David Dinkins, New York Representative Charles Rangel, and Andrew Young (the former mayor of Atlanta and onetime Ambassador to the United Nations) led about a thousand people, representing religious, political, and racial organizations—among them Asian, Caribbean, black, Muslim, Hispanic, Jewish, and Italian—from Forty-second Street and Second Avenue to Forty-seventh Street and United Nations Plaza, in what was advertised as a Beloved Community March. "Beloved community" was a term that King had used in this city a year before his death to describe an ideal town or city, which would flourish without racism, poverty, or violence. In a speech earlier this year, Young said that a march honoring King would be especially appropriate here, since, in his own view, New York came closest to reflecting the beloved community King had dreamed of; he did not say how many witnesses he had located, here or elsewhere, who concurred in this judgment. When Mayor Dinkins addressed the crowd, he mentioned, as he does several times a day (he is up for reëlection this year), that during his administration crime in the city has gone down, and he made a plea, as he also often does, for passage of the Brady bill, whose provisions include requiring a waiting period before a gun sale can be completed. In a dramatization of the need for gun control, several dozen children came to the march, by invitation, and turned in their toy guns. Gun control would not be enough, however. In a three-day period following the march, three New York teen-agers were killed by other teen-agers: all the victims were stabbed to death.

Like the problems of violence and poverty, those of race—which is now often dealt with under the more elevated label "ethnicity," covering a preoccupation (often intense) with one's own or someone else's genetic roots—have, of course, not diminished at all since King spoke of his dream. Indeed, it often seems that those operating in the worlds of politics and government, even at the highest level, can rarely get through a day without having to make some decision that turns at least partly on ethnicity. The makers of lists of candidates to recommend to President Clinton for the new Administration have been required to take into account how well the candidates measure up in regard to the EGG factor—EGG standing for ethnicity, gender, and geography. Last October, Clinton had told someone—significantly, some here thought—that he would give every penny he has in the bank for a ringside seat at the first confrontation on the Supreme Court between a Justice Mario Cuomo and the ultra-conservative Justice Antonin Scalia. On April 7th, Cuomo wrote to the President, saying that although he did not know whether the President would offer him the Court appointment that had opened up with the announced retirement of Justice Byron White, he did not wish to be considered for the seat. Clinton had mentioned Cuomo twice in the past as the kind of justice he would like to appoint, and had apparently not approached any other candidate to ask if the investigation process could go forward—as the White House has said was his purpose when he called Cuomo early this month—but some observers concluded that New York's governor would never have been offered the seat anyhow, on account of the EGG factor. After all, the Court already had a male Italian-American who grew up in

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Queens. So far, no one has added initials to the EGG acronym to cover the element of ideology. (How about EGGROL, for ethnicity, gender, geography, and right or left?) In last month's Gridiron Club show, put on by Washington reporters, the biggest hit was the song in which Chief Justice William Rehnquist (very low EGG rating) was portrayed singing about how he wished he had more conservatives on the bench like Scalia, and calling "Scalia" "the most reactionary word I ever heard." (Rehnquist, who was in the Gridiron audience, did not crack a smile.) The song's lyrics ("Scalia/Say it loud and there's trumpets playing/Say it soft and you'll hear schoolkids praying") were sung to the tune of "Maria" from "West Side Story," whose setting was not a reactionary place.

The choice of the United Nations as the destination of the Beloved Community March was a gesture of valiant hope on the part of its organizers, in view of the United Nations' tragic lack of success in finding a way to end the bloody conflict over ethnic cleansing in Bosnia. So far, no one knows what may be the result of a gesture toward resolving this city's ethnic problems—an official effort that came from an unexpected quarter. A few months ago, when the city comptroller's office sent out letters asking investment and banking organizations to bid on New York's lucrative municipal-bond underwriting contracts, it requested not only that the bidders include their ideas for improving the city's financial return but also, citing the crisis in Yugoslavia and the rise of xenophobia in Germany, that they "describe what your firm is doing in the workplace and in the communities where your firm operates to combat discrimination and bigotry." One Wall Street recipient of the letter said, "I'm sure if you take a poll of firms in the Street you'll find that they are against ethnic cleansing."

It's no news, of course, that even those with the best of intentions who try to resolve ethnic conflicts here may find that they make little progress, since whatever created such fierce hostilities often happened in faraway places and perhaps centuries ago. In the Greek Independence Day parade up Fifth Avenue, in which Mayor Dinkins and other local politicians march every spring, whether or not it's an election year, the emphasis last month was on Macedonia and the need to treat it as an integral part of Greece rather than as a former province of Yugoslavia. George Delis, one of the organizers of the parade, explained that the current problems in Yugoslavia were the fault of what he said had been thirty-four hundred years of oppression by the Turkish Ottoman Empire. He spoke harshly of the Turks and favorably of the Italians, who came to the aid of the Greeks a hundred and seventy-two years ago in their war of independence against the Turks—which may explain why Mario Cuomo, the first Italian-American to be elected governor of this state, does well in Greek-American districts. During the parade, some Greeks were attacked by a band of young Turks—their accurate name for themselves—and the scuffle caused injuries to two city policemen of unknown ethnic heritage.

Despite Clinton's advertised attention to the EGG factor, there have been frequent letters of complaint to local papers about his failure to appoint representatives of one or another ethnic heritage to high positions in what a letter from Queens described as his "paint-by-the-numbers cabinet." ("Is it because he feels Asian-Americans don't 'look' as much 'like America' as blacks, Hispanics, women and limousine liberals?" the letter said.) Early grumbling that Clinton had not appointed a Greek-American to such a position ("Greeks helped build this country . . . but when it comes to cutting up the pie we are forgotten") subsided after his director of communications, George Stephanopoulos (whose father is the dean of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in this city), began to show up all over the tube. Complaints that the Clinton people may not have expected were those which took exception to the Inaugural poet Maya Angelou's hailing of the contributions to the nation of Irish, Greeks, Turks, Scots, Swedes, French, Germans, and Native Americans but leaving out Italians. ("I'm outraged," one Queens resident wrote.) Possibly, it had not been explained to Angelou that poets had to take into account the EGG factor. Someone apparently felt it necessary to make amends, however; the official version of her poem includes the Italians.

Cuomo may have alienated one non-ethnic group of voters—judges who have persuaded themselves and their friends that judicial eminence is the highest political calling—by some remarks he

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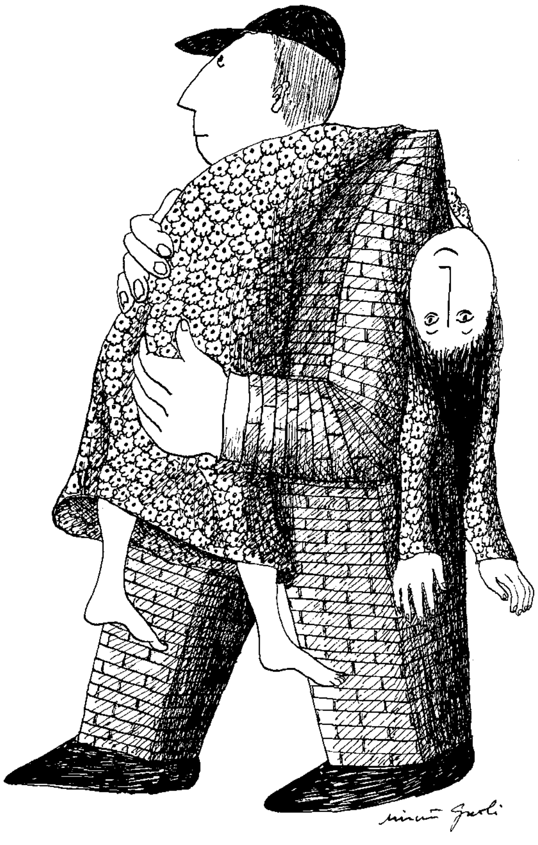
made last month. In a way, he said, the prospect of being on the Supreme Court was heaven, especially to someone who has a deep interest in the law, as he does. But he also said, "They put you in this big room. They slam this mahogany door shut. And you're dead. You're entombed." On the Supreme Court, he said, "You don't have to wear pants! You can live your life in a robe." All in all, Cuomo-watchers should probably not have been surprised when he decided (if it was his decision) that, at sixty (he will be sixty-one in June), he was not ready to give up active political life—being in the midst of things, dealing with the problems of real people, serving on the front lines, as he described it two weeks ago—for a pantsless, entombed existence.

In the few weeks between the announcement of Justice White's coming retirement and Cuomo's removal of his name from consideration (which was generally taken as a tacit admission that next year he would be running for a fourth gubernatorial term), there was a happy scramble to replace Cuomo among both Democratic and Republican politicians. With Cuomo choosing to stay in Albany, the Democrats went back to whatever they had been doing, but the Republicans continue four-square on the case. The last New York governor to be elected four times was a Republican—Nelson Rockefeller, who resigned halfway through his last term to try to get elected President, a project that did not work out. The candidate on whom many Republicans had been pinning their hopes, Sol Wachtler, would not be available. Having resigned as chief justice of the state's highest court, the Court of Appeals—a post to which he had been appointed by Cuomo in 1985, although he was a Republican—Wachtler was about to be sentenced for having written obscene and menacing letters to his former lover and for threatening to kidnap her fourteen-year-old daughter. Until a day or so before his arrest, on November 7th, he had been telling friends, and hinting in public, that he would probably leave the bench and run for governor next year. Last June, when members of the Legislative Correspondents Association in Albany put on their version of the Gridiron show, the chief judge was the hit of the evening. Cuomo did not attend, explaining that it was his thirty-eighth wedding anniversary. Wachtler made jokes about Cuomo's indecisiveness, saying that at his wedding he had said not "I do" but "I might," and that he was now getting ready to throw his hat in the ring for the 1988 Presidential nomination. Wachtler got the biggest laugh with his proposed campaign slogan for the 1994 race against Cuomo: "Anyone who would appoint me as chief judge is not fit to be governor"—a line that would be received today with a response other than laughter.

With Wachtler out of the picture, many of the state's Republican leaders had become excited over the possibility that after General Colin Powell leaves the Army, in September, they could draft him as their candidate and thus possibly elect the state's first black governor—appropriate actions, they could argue, for the party of the man who emancipated the slaves. After all, Powell was born in Harlem, grew up in the South Bronx, graduated from City College, and has kept the Bronx as his primary residence. Of course, there would be problems with his strong opposition to gays in the military, but not among Republicans such as those who at a G.O.P. dinner in Virginia last month gave Oliver North—a probable candidate for the United States Senate from that state—a huge hand when he claimed in a speech that he hadn't been able to reach Clinton at the White House until he talked with a lisp, and then he was put right through. Another problem was that no one knew Powell's political party; he is registered as an independent. There is his own account of how, in 1964, when he was stationed in the South, a white cop gave him a hard time not because he was black but because the cop was a strong Barry Goldwater supporter and "I was on the other side"—that is, he was for Goldwater's Democratic opponent, L.B.J. With any luck, Republicans here may be able to persuade him of the onetime error of his ways—not that Republicans have been having much political luck these days.



All I Ask For Is a Man I Can Lean On

LATE in the afternoon on the last Presidential Election Day, a blond young woman standing near the foot of the stairs in one of Manhattan's grungier subway stations delivered an impassioned plea to an older black woman to go and vote—specifically, to vote for Bill Clinton. The older woman was reluctant. "Will it make any difference?" she asked, her voice rising almost to a wail. "Yes, it will! Yes!" the young woman assured her. Unexpectedly, and possibly to their own surprise, several people coming down the stairs to the subway chimed in: "Yes!" Perhaps there were no Republicans in the crowd—something that can happen in this heavily Democratic city. If there were, they kept their opinions to themselves. Whether historians will conclude that the election's outcome made a real difference, apart from the changes inevitable in the takeover of the executive branch by a member of a new generation and by a party that had endured a long involuntary absence, no one knows, of course. But Clinton's relatively rambunctious style—insisting on being in the middle of everything, engaging in what verges on hand-to-hand combat over facts, figures, and ideas—seemed to bear out the prediction of Truman's biographer David McCullough that Clinton would be one of the Presidents who enjoy not only being President but the process of governing, just as, he suggested, Kennedy and the two Roosevelts did. Possibly this has something to do with age and energy: Kennedy and Theodore Roosevelt are the only two Presidents who were younger than Clinton when they took office, and F.D.R. was only five years older. Whatever the effect of the Clinton style on history, his vigorous involvement in the nuts and bolts of governing is a problem for politicians elsewhere as they try to draw a little of the attention being trained on the current Washington show to their own concerns—particularly if, as in the case of Mayor Dinkins, the only nuts and bolts that seem to count are those that may win them reëlection in November.

In several recent editions of the *Times* "Week in Review" section, no local-government news was considered worth reviewing. The stark contrast between the amount of time New York pol-watchers are willing to spend on developments in Washington and the amount they consent to spend on those in their home city probably has nothing to do with the ages of the Mayor and the President (senior citizen versus baby boomer), and certainly has nothing to do with the fact that the Mayor did not play the saxophone at the Inner Circle show, the annual musical lampoon put on by City Hall reporters, as Clinton did last month at the Gridiron Club show. The explanation lies in the dramatic changes promised—and, to a degree, delivered—in the nation's capital and the terrible sameness, to the point of near-terminal tedium, here at City Hall, especially during the Mayor's daily or twice-daily press conferences. Reporters dragging themselves across the rotunda to the Blue Room, where the meetings are held, are prepared to hear the Mayor mention that he is very fond of children. ("Children are the best people, you know.") And they can expect that, although Bush and Reagan are gone from the scene, he will denounce them for neglecting the cities. After his ritual mention of the fact that crime is down here, he will ask why reporters don't give him, and his Police Department, more credit for the improved figures, ignoring the fact that murders, for example, were lower in number last year only in comparison with his own first two years in office, when homicides rose above two thousand for the first time in local history.

The Mayor was known to be very eager to bring them in under this number in 1992. According to Police Department calculations that were released in January, the total for 1992 was likely to be two thousand and twenty. Miraculously, the final figure was discovered to be nineteen hundred and ninety-five. This doesn't mean that bodies rose from the dead—only that Department statisticians may learn that, for example, in the case of a body found in one year the crime was actually committed the year before. Even so, the official number of 1992 murders is nine hundred more than the total in 1989, the last year in office of Dinkins' predecessor, Edward Koch.

When a Dinkins press conference is called for a specific purpose, such as to announce a new municipal project, the Mayor, often having been handed an overlong speech by his staff, reads it

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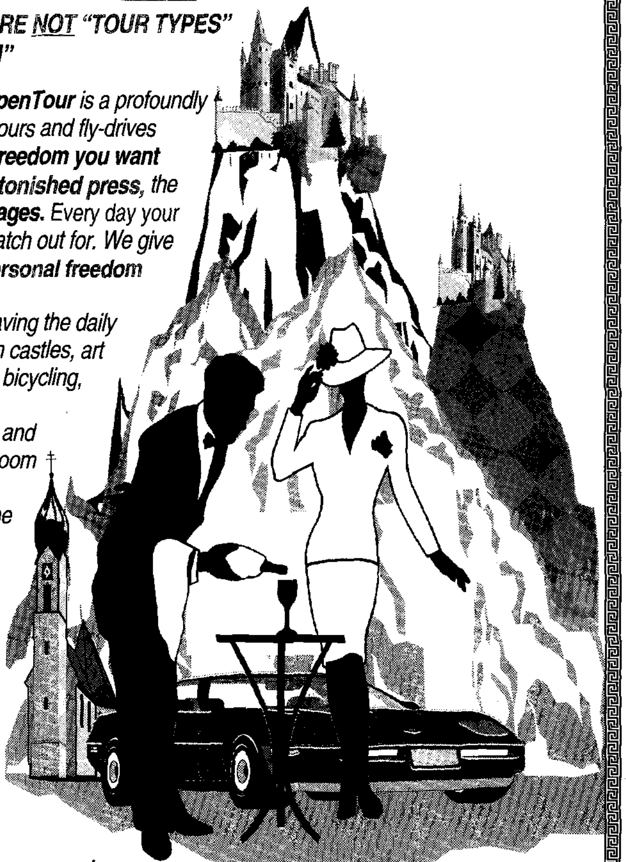

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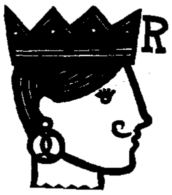
word for word, varying not by an adjective from the text. If a reporter then asks how some number—the cost to the city, say—was reached or how many New Yorkers the project will be helpful to, Dinkins simply reads back what it says on the paper in his hand. Repetition does not seem to offend him as much as it does many people; indeed, he appears to be quite comfortable with it. Like many public officials, he frequently speaks at funerals. On almost every occasion, he says, near the end of the eulogy, "It is said that service to others is the rent we pay for our space on earth" and adds, filling in the name of the person he's honoring, ". . . departed us paid in full." As mayor, Dinkins has used the line fifty or so times. Sometimes the departed were people he never knew—policemen or firemen killed in the line of duty, for example. He also used it at the funeral of his father, at that of his Harlem clubhouse mentor, J. Raymond Jones, and at a celebration honoring Robert F. Kennedy during last summer's Democratic Convention. When Dinkins' good friend Arthur Ashe died, in February, he attended both the funeral in Ashe's home town—Richmond, Virginia—and the memorial service here. He delivered the line, and, indeed, most of the eulogy, both times with the identical intonations and an identical affectionate message for Ashe's six-year-old daughter, Camera (it began "Camera, sweetheart"), which appeared in his prepared script.



When, at City Hall press conferences, the Mayor concludes that reporters are unduly aggressive in questioning the version of things offered in the press release someone has handed to him, he tends to deal with them in tones far short of the mayoral politesse that was often approvingly described early in his administration. For example, he told Evido de la Cruz, of *El Diario*, who had quoted the complaints of Hispanic leaders that Hispanics had been slighted in mayoral appointments, that if Cruz were a first-class reporter he would have looked into the charges and found that they were totally without basis. (The Latino vote is expected to be critical in this fall's election, when there is a real danger that the city's first black mayor could turn out to be a one-term mayor.) In last month's Inner Circle show (in honor of Dinkins' prospects, it was called "Running Scared"), the rebuttal prepared for the Mayor by his staff, with some help from Broadway writers, described Joe Calderone, a *Newsday* reporter who has raised questions about Dinkins' ethical standards, as "a terrorist" (this was soon after the World Trade Center bombing), and a performer from "Guys and Dolls," whose cast was helping the Mayor out, said of a woman reporter for a local tabloid that he had been out with her "and I've still got the rash."

In contrast to the glum expression that Dinkins wears during his meetings with the press, the pictures of him that New Yorkers often find in their papers the next morning—taken the night before at dinners, receptions, Broadway shows, celebrity roasts—show him wearing (besides, of course, one of his famous tuxedos) a big, even brilliant, smile. It is said that there is not enough happiness in this world, and on such occasions the Mayor is clearly a happy man. He takes evident pleasure in other aspects of being mayor, too. Several times a day, he releases to reporters a statement about some national or international development, no matter how far outside the scope of municipal government—what to do about Bosnia, Somalia, or El Salvador, for example. Also, every day or two there is a sympathetic letter to a prominent figure whom he may have scarcely met. He sent a sympathy note to George Bush after the November election ("Having lost a few elections myself, I know how you must feel at this time") and one, early this month, to Mrs. Clinton ("Dear Hillary"), saying that he was "saddened to learn of the passing of your father, Hugh Rodham," and adding, "Having lost my own father a few years ago, I understand the emotions you must be feeling right now." There is something touching about the gratification Dinkins—who for most of his years, before he became mayor, was on the far fringes of local political life—now takes in communicating as one head of government with another (or the wife thereof), but, like so many of the activities that fill his days and nights, it is not a substitute for governing this great and troubled city.

THE lineup of Dinkins' rivals in the mayoral race does not promise any new covenants. Indeed, most of the players are only too familiar on the local political scene. Among those expected to face the Mayor in the Democratic primary are the current president of the City Council, Andrew Stein, who beat Dinkins in races for the Manhattan borough presidency in 1977 and 1981, and Herman Badillo, who in 1970 was elected the first Puerto Rican member of the House of Representatives. In 1969, 1973, and 1977, Badillo ran unsuccessfully for mayor. By 1978, he had resigned from the House to serve as a deputy mayor for Koch; eighteen months later, he left the post, Koch having concluded that he was not up to the job. Three years afterward, when Mario Cuomo ran a presumably hopeless race for the governorship against Koch, who was then regarded as politically all-powerful, Badillo endorsed Cuomo, causing Koch to describe them both as born losers. As many other certain victors have discovered, there is a substantial born-loser bloc of voters out there: Cuomo won and has been in Albany ever since. This year, Koch, whom Dinkins defeated in the 1989 Democratic mayoral primary, has endorsed for mayor his allegedly inadequate deputy.

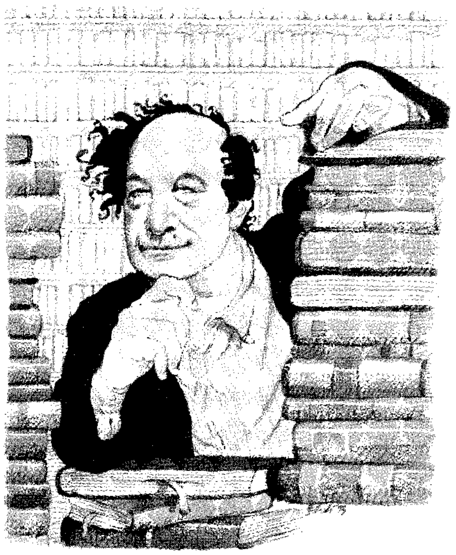
A third candidate is Roy Innis, an African-American, who, as head of the Congress of Racial Equality since the late nineteen-sixties, led that civil-rights organization from importance to obscurity, and has now concluded that the civil-rights movement has been in many ways perverted; Bernhard Goetz, he believes, had every right to shoot four black boys on an I.R.T. No. 2 subway train some years back. The Republican candidate in the general election is expected to be Rudolph Giuliani, an Italian-American and a former local United States attorney, who also ran for mayor in 1989 and came within two percentage points of beating Dinkins. A question that naturally arises is how the state of Arkansas, which George Bush described last year as the lowest of the low, came up with someone who could be elected President, while this world-renowned, stuck-on-itself city has been able to assemble an array of contenders for mayor who, though they represent several ethnic bases, in the current political style, are—including the incumbent—so far from being an inspiriting spectacle. ♦

THE PRINCE OF BOOKS

His new novel has made Roberto Calasso an international sensation, but in Italy he is also celebrated as a publisher who has helped to change the way the literati think.

BY ANDREA LEE

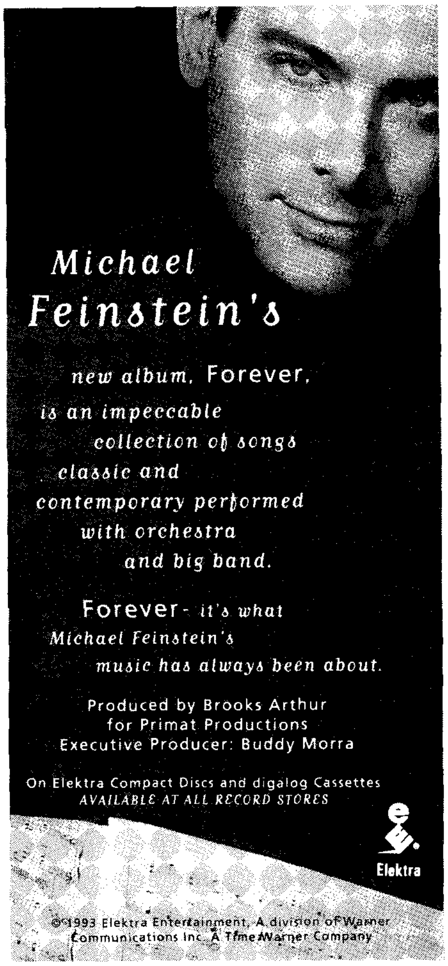
BENEATH the cloud of dishonor that nowadays hangs over Milan, as the center of the national corruption scandal whose revelations have, among other things, annihilated an entire class of Italian politician, the hidden creative life of the city is going ahead as usual. Always a bit miserly on the cultural side—apart from the fashion business, it is one of the most provincial cities in Europe—Milan provides its artists and writers with an environment much like a coal mine, in which each tunnels alone in pursuit of a private goal, concealed from all the others and from the rest of humanity. And very occasionally out of this unpromising setting a powerful, idiosyncratic, undeniably important vision surfaces to the eyes of the world. This has happened most recently in the case of the writer and publisher Roberto Calasso. Calasso's third book, "Le Nozze di Cadmo e Armonia" ("The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony"), a remarkable peregrination through Greek mythology, became a surprise best-seller in Italy in 1988, a success followed by a triumphal progress throughout Europe, literary prizes, and translation into fifteen languages. An American edition has just been published by Knopf and seems likely to gather even more laurels. This lovely book seemed to appear on the international horizon out of nowhere; but in fact it is the product of a complex creative development within an imagination that is solidly rooted in Italian intellectual life and yet—like all pure insight—has no age and no country.



"Clever fellow, that Calasso," Theodor Adorno is said to have remarked. "He's read everything I've written and even some things I haven't had the time to write yet."

TULLIO PERICOLI

For more than a decade now, Calasso, who is fifty-one, has enjoyed a particular type of celebrity in Italy. On the Italian literary scene, a landscape of generally scrubby growth dominated by a few towering presences, he has become one of those who tower. This prominence is due not simply to his writing but also to his other identity—he is the editorial director and the guiding spirit of Adelphi Edizioni, of Milan, a thirty-one-year-old publishing house known for high quality and a cosmopolitan intellectual outlook. His two previous books, "L'Impuro Folle" (Adelphi, 1974) and "La Rovina di Kasch" (Adelphi, 1983), were both critical successes: ambitious, cerebral, playful, enigmatic works with a wild energy and logic of their own, and composed in a dense mosaic style that combines anecdote and quotation, evocation and reflection, and draws on a vast range of philosophical and historical sources. Similarly dense with allusion are a succession of essays he began to publish in the magazine *L'Espresso* and as book afterwords in the late sixties—essays of biting intelligence on subjects ranging from Karl Kraus to Coca-Cola, in which he occasionally takes to pieces the leftist poses that have plagued the Italian intellectual establishment since the war. By the mid-eighties, his writing and the increasing success of Adelphi had established Calasso as one of the country's most brilliant literary figures. With the success of "Le Nozze," the ever-inventive Italian press came up with a nickname for



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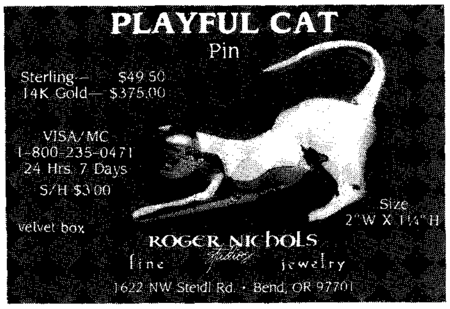

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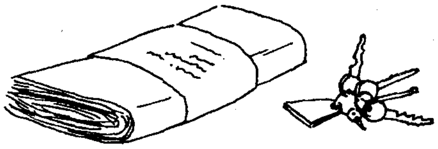
Calasso: *l'Anti-Eco*—the anti-Umberto Eco. The image evoked is of two massive intellects, creators of massive books ("Le Nozze" appeared in the same season as Eco's novel "Foucault's Pendulum"), circling each other in a boxing ring. The intention seems to be to raise Calasso to the level of the giants, and there is something rather touching in the reasoning of the press: a naïve pride in having so much highbrow brawn in a country where everything else is going wrong.

Calasso himself, unlike Eco, has remained something of a mystery to the Italian public. In recent years, interviewers have been sent out to uncover *Calasso, l'uomo*—"Calasso, the man"—and have returned like failed expedition teams, with tales of a kind of literary K-2: remote, hostile, covered with glacial ice in which strange things from other epochs are vaguely to be glimpsed. "They warned me," the journalist Pia Cillario wrote in an Italian *Vanity Fair* article, which was mostly about not communicating with Calasso. " 'He can be unpleasant, cold, full of himself, narcissistic, megalomaniac, insolent, snobbish.' " Other journalists have called him, variously, elusive, enigmatic, and oblique. Stories circulate of an alarming wunderkind past: that he read all of Proust in French at thirteen and all of Goethe in German at fourteen; that the erudition and brilliance of the essay he wrote for his high-school-completion exam, on the theme of history and myth in Greek tragedy, sent the instructors into a trance of admiration, like the elders around Jesus in the temple; and that at twenty or twenty-one, when he was passionately interested in the philosophy of Theodor Adorno, he encountered and dazzled Adorno at a Roman salon run by the daughter of the philosopher Benedetto Croce. "Clever fellow, that Calasso," Adorno is reported to have said afterward to his hostess. "He's read everything I've written and even some things I haven't had the time to write yet."

Part of the Calasso legend is his array of friendships: with the Agnelli family; with Joseph Brodsky, Oliver Sacks, Elias Canetti, and Pierre Klossowski, the painter and writer who is the brother of Balthus; with Bruce Chatwin, Milan Kundera, and Derek Walcott; and, it is rumored, with a host of shadowy creative recluses tucked away in odd corners of the world. Calasso doesn't talk about his friends, and people who are close to Calasso generally don't talk about him, but the few things they do say or write have resonance. In 1983, one friend, the Swiss writer Jean-Jacques Langendorf, published a novel called "La Comtesse Graziani, ou les Triomphes du Proxénétisme," in which there appears a certain Abbot Calasso, a robust libertine and habitué of Milan's most elegant brothels, who is at work on a lengthy treatise entitled "Prolegomena to a Theology of Rape." Another friend, the writer Guido Ceronetti, has described Calasso as "that gnostic serpent." And another writer, the novelist Fleur Jaeggy, who has been married to Calasso for twenty-five years, in interviews refers to her husband either as just "Calasso" or as "that fellow from the publishing house." Only Brodsky has been more voluble. Speaking, in a recent interview, of his friend's "voracious metaphysical appetites," he said, "He's an interesting phenomenon, Calasso. He absorbs absolutely everything. The mind of the gentleman is nothing less than the history of civilization in miniature. He's a crucible: he mingles East and West, he extracts essences, and the aim is infinity. I would say . . . that Calasso is the only man on the Continent with whom conversation is totally rewarding."

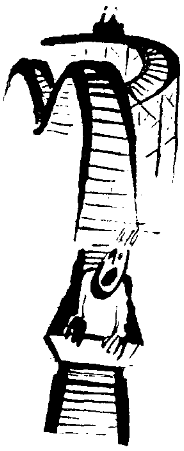
KNOWING the Italian press fairly well, I am not surprised when, upon meeting Calasso, I find not an unapproachable *monstre sacré* in the formative stages but an affable, faintly professorial man in a tweed jacket whose single—and forgivable—peculiarity seems to be an overmannered way of smoking Gauloises. Both in his photographs and in person, Calasso has an appearance that one cannot help feeling is satisfyingly appropriate for a European man of letters: a Mediterranean face, with an aesthete's nose, hooded eyes, and thin lips, framed by an evenly receding wave of dark hair over a domed forehead.

Yet after one talks to him for a few minutes all this solid visual information is overridden by a powerful sense of mutability—an almost uncanny versatility, which appears not simply in his gestures or moods but even in the flesh that expresses them, as if his cells were constantly assuming new configurations. Sometimes he looks round, expansive, and sanguine, a suitable prototype of the Abbot Calasso; at other times he appears angular and phlegmatic, withdrawn into some austere inner space; and when he stands up he is always taller or shorter than one remembers. Words that often appear in Calasso's spoken vocabulary—words of praise for a writer, a thinker, a friend—are "agile," "mercurial," "amphibian."



"My life is a bit schizophrenic," he tells me as we sit drinking coffee in his minuscule office at home, I in a large armchair draped with an antique paisley shawl and he, a foot away, at a small, book-crammed desk he has worked at since he was a student. His manner of speaking is pleasant and didactic, his voice rather nasal and upper-class. "I have two vocations. They are both completely devouring. Being a writer obviously takes everything out of you. And publishing is a total adventure, a sort of chronic case of heightened emotion. Being a publisher and a writer is a bit like being a commodities broker and a commodity—it makes a contrast that is sometimes comic and sometimes annoying." He adds thoughtfully, "But not boring."

The apartment where Calasso and Fleur Jaeggy live is a maze of miniature rooms in a wing of a seventeenth-century palazzo in the heart of the city; it is light and airy, but is filled with the peculiar sense of interiority—of concentration inward—that is typical of dwellings in Milan. A terrace looks out over one of the city's hidden gardens. Everything in the apartment seems somehow connected to the process of reading and creating books, and the atmosphere is dominated by the physical presence of books, which line the walls. The books, many of them rare and antique, seem to have lent their autumnal tints to the paintings that hang above them—some of which have been used on the covers of Adelphi editions—and to the Indian fabrics that cover the few, essential pieces of furniture. In an office at one end of the apartment, Jaeggy, a slender woman with a beautiful, skittish face, composes novels and short stories that are as small-scale, intense, and impeccably focussed as her husband's works are sprawling and macrocosmic. (Her 1989 novel "Sweet Days of Discipline" won the Rapallo and Bagutta prizes and is being published in the United States next month by New Directions.) At the other end, Calasso—that fellow from the publishing house—keeps an assistant scurrying all morning as he deals with authors, editors, translators, and agents, reads manuscripts and books, writes jacket copy and publicity material, and keeps an eye on the company's accounts. In the afternoons, he goes into the Adelphi offices; and at some point during the day—no one is quite sure when—he finds time to write his books.



Before starting to talk about his family and his early life, we begin, naturally, to look at books. Calasso shows me a few of his treasures: a first edition of Spinoza's 1670 "Tractatus Theologico-Politicus"; an offprint by Freud inscribed by the author; an incunabulum of Boccaccio's "De Genealogia Deorum Gentilium"; a complete collection of Karl Kraus's red-bound review *Die Fackel,* which Calasso bought years ago from a mysterious old Austrian antique dealer, whom he later realized must have been an ex-Nazi. As he begins handling these volumes, he undergoes one of his lightning changes of manner, becoming pale and abstracted, and forgetting himself in a book lover's ardor. For him, clearly, everything begins here. "There's something very important even in just living with certain books," he says. "I had from a very early age a sense of familiarity with these things that you can't get when they're behind glass. Books like this Spinoza were sprinkled through the shelves of my parents' and my grandparents' libraries. When they are part of daily life, when you take them in your hand and open and shut them, you understand something even before reading them."

Lives saturated in books most often grow out of bookish families. Calasso was born in Florence into an extraordinary intellectual clan of the *alta borghesia*, a family steeped in the progressive, liberal tradition of Benedetto Croce, who was a friend of Calasso's grandfather Ernesto Codignola. Three professions dominated the family: publishing, scholarship, and university teaching. Codignola, a professor of philosophy at the University of Florence and an educational reformer, founded the Scuola Città, a well-known student-run pedagogical institute that still exists in Florence; he also founded an important academic publishing company, La Nuova Italia, which is still in the family and is run by Calasso's cousin. Calasso's uncle Tristano Codignola was one of the leaders of the Resistance during the Second World War, and after the war he became a Minister of Education, a reformer, like his father, and a leftist politician notorious for sabotaging conservative coalition governments. Calasso's father, Francesco, was a professor of the history of law, first at the University of Florence and then at the University of Rome, where he became the dean of the Faculty of Law. Calasso's mother, Melisenda Codignola, obtained a degree in Greek literature from the University of Florence, and laid aside graduate research on Hölderlin's translations of Pindar to rear three children.

A shadow was cast over Calasso's early childhood by the war; in 1944, Francesco Calasso was arrested by the Fascists in retaliation for the partisan assassination of the pro-Fascist philosopher Giovanni Gentile. Through the intervention of Gentile's children and other friends, Francesco Calasso was quickly released, but the family had to go into hiding. For some months, they lived, like Anne Frank's family in Amsterdam, in a concealed attic wing in the house of friends of friends.

Once the war was over, Roberto's childhood unrolled with tranquillity in a Florence that felt like a small university town, peopled by a close-knit network of relatives and friends who shared the same intellectual and cultural interests, the same genteel leftism. Calasso, the classic solitary, fanciful, precocious child, was never pushed in any direction by his parents. Absent-mindedly, he collected the highest grades at school while saving his energy for what really interested him: a passionate and joyous voyage through three huge libraries. One was in his parents' house; the second was in his grandparents' house, across the street; and the third was the celebrated Florentine institution the Gabinetto Vieusseux, a private library in the Palazzo Strozzi that had the atmosphere of an English club. (Calasso's father, along with the poet Eugenio Montale, happened to be on the board of directors.) In this almost uninterrupted landscape of books Calasso roamed undisturbed, devouring, by the time he was

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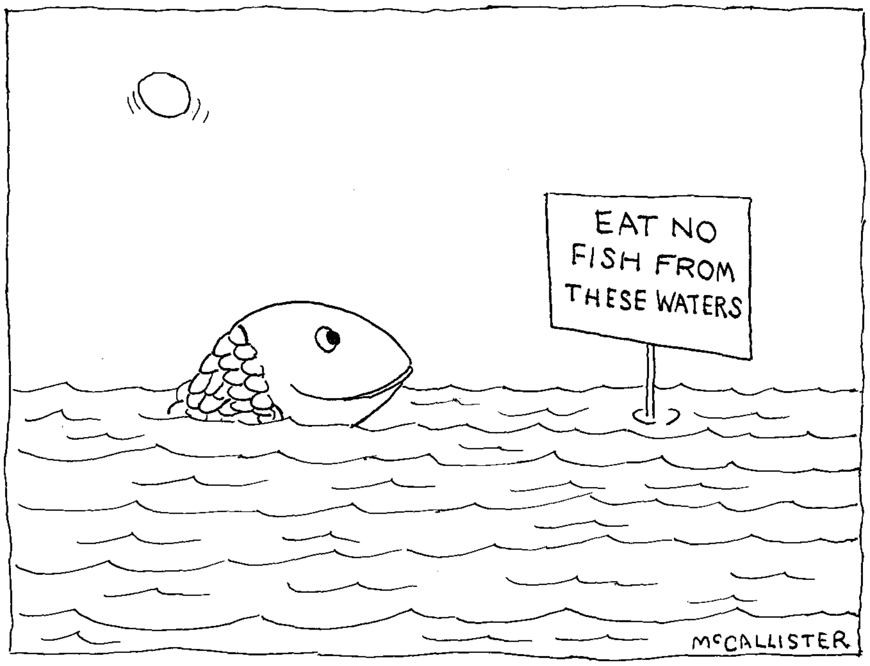

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nine or ten, a vast indiscriminate mixture of English, French, and Russian classics, American detective novels, the exotic adventure tales of Emilio Salgari, and anything else he might come upon. He describes it as an idyll: strolling between libraries through the streets of Florence, occasionally stopping in the well-known bar Procacci for one of his favorite sandwiches flavored with truffles.

Little changed for him with his family's move to Rome, in 1954, when his father accepted a position with its university. The family continued to move in academic and intellectual circles. Roberto, enrolled at the distinguished Tasso school, discovered life in a cosmopolitan city and a passion for the cinema. But reading continued to be the most important thing in his life, and from early adolescence on, his interests divided into channels. One channel was French literature, especially the Symbolists and Proust, whose "À la Recherche du Temps Perdu" he did indeed read at thirteen, when he was laid up with a sprained knee at Christmas. A second channel was classical literature—he studied Latin for eight years and Greek for five—and that interest led to the famous baccalaureate exam on Greek tragedy, dense with footnotes and scholarly citations, which sent the Tasso faculty into shock. And there was the German channel, which led from high German philosophy and Romantic literature to Nietzsche and to a passion for the early-modern period and its numerous tributaries, including the Frankfurt School and Adorno. By the early sixties, some of his schoolmates were becoming emotionally involved with radical politics, but Calasso remained uncommitted, and has done so throughout his adult life. "My family was one of the established families of the Italian left," he says. "At five or six years old, I heard my parents discuss ideas that many people discover at twenty. When you know a thing from the inside out, when you can see clearly what functions and what doesn't function in a political stance, it loses its power of enchanting."

As Calasso reaches this point in what he's telling me, a fax machine rings and the editorial assistant darts in, and we decide to continue later. Before I leave, however, he wants to show me something else. "This is really the only bone of contention I have with Umberto Eco," he says, with a smile, taking two parchment-bound volumes down from a shelf. "One of the few connections between us, and the only arena in which we compete shamelessly."

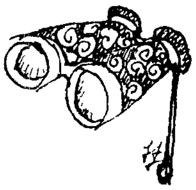
The books he is showing me are first editions of the works of Athanasius Kircher, a prolific seventeenth-century Jesuit scholar, whose fantastically broad array of interests, embracing most of the arts and sciences, has led some to call him the last Renaissance man. Both Eco and Calasso are, unsurprisingly, attracted by this adventurous polymath (Kircher once had himself lowered into a volcano to study the aftereffects of an eruption) and, as collectors of Kircher, race to outdo each other in the shadowy, emotion-fraught network of auctions and private sales.

I mention the term Anti-Eco, and Calasso rolls his eyes. "It's really too silly even to comment on," he says. "All I can say is that I've known Umberto for thirty years, and the main reason we think of each other is over this shared obsession, this ongoing duel. Occasionally, we see each other for dinner, and when that happens there is always a moment when the two of us withdraw from the rest of the company and sidle off to compare acquisitions. He, unfortunately, has a few more titles than I do, but I have a volume with Kircher's signature, which he does not have, and envies greatly." He chuckles softly, and for a minute it is possible to imagine him as a child, wandering blissfully through forests of books. "It's like two little boys showing off their marbles," he says.

ANYONE who goes into a bookstore in Italy can spot the Adelphi books from a distance: beautifully designed softbound volumes with covers that display the combination of refined graphics and a certain type of art reproduction that is a semaphore of high culture to most European and American eyes. A glance at the titles in the Adelphi catalogue, which number almost two thousand, shows few Italian authors, a leaning toward the outsiders of the German and French philosophical and literary traditions, an interest in fable, folklore, and Western and Oriental mysticism, and otherwise a remarkably heterogeneous assortment of classics and almost willfully obscure works from every age and every corner of the world. This sense of unified diversity has been part of the Adelphi image and intention since its beginning, in 1962. It is suggested in its name—Adelphi is Greek for "brothers"—and in its colophon, which is an ancient Chinese pre-ideogram that shows two small, different but harmonious figures balanced above a crescent moon. Anyone who knows Calasso might also find that the symbol suggests the balance between the two sides of his life. Certainly it is impossible to discuss Calasso the writer for very long without discussing Calasso the publisher.

"What is a publishing house, if not a long serpent made out of pages? Each segment of the serpent is a book. Or one could see that series of segments as a single enormous book, a book that contains many literary forms, many styles, many periods, but which continues, calmly, to go forward, adding on new chapters, which are books by different authors. A perverse and polymorphous book." This extremely Calassian conceit is part of a typewritten essay that the author hands me to look over when I arrive at the Adelphi offices on a rainy afternoon for a chat with him. The offices are situated off the courtyard of a big nineteenth-century house in the Magenta district, the heart of old bourgeois Milan, where on foggy winter days the streets have a muffled Edwardian look. As is appropriate for a small publishing house with rigorous high standards, the atmosphere is that of an academic warren—full of brown light, hushed intensity, stacked boxes and papers, the smell of old wood, and pretty young women with baggy pants and graduate-student pallor.

The essay I'm reading is the preface to a book that Calasso dreams of publishing, a book that would close the ultimate literary circle: an Adelphi collection of Adelphi *risvolti*, or book blurbs—almost all of which are written by Calasso himself. It is a form he is very fond of, the point at which his two professions overlap. "There are anonymous pieces on book jackets where I've put things that are as important to me as anything in my essays," he says, leaning an elbow on his desk and opening a package of cigarettes. As might be expected, he looks quite different today from the professorial figure of our last meeting. This afternoon he is rather elegant, formal and sleek in a Milanese businessman's suit. "The game is this: to write something that actually has substance but write it in a way that will make a casual reader curious and will also inspire a bookstore owner in the smallest provincial town in Italy to order the book." But Calasso makes it clear that when he selects books to publish his first consideration is not the needs of marketing people or bookstore owners: "I have always thought just one thing was essential: to print only books one takes pleasure in reading. Printing a book one doesn't admire is like including a badly written chapter in a novel."



Of course, small idealistic publishing companies with this kind of philosophy have arisen and perished like desert flowers in Italy, as in the rest of the world. What is remarkable about Adelphi is that, through its leaders' combination of vision, hard work, and unusually sound financial management, the company has managed not merely to survive for thirty-one years but to become immensely profitable—in 1992, it had sales of thirty-two billion lire, or twenty-one million dollars—without changing its agenda. In a 1986 magazine article on publishing, the journalist Massimo Fini described the company as "an extraordinary intellectual adventure" and "one of the very few secure points of reference in Italian culture." The two founders of Adelphi, Roberto Bazlen, who was Calasso's mentor, and who died in 1965, and Luciano Foà, who is seventy-eight and currently shares the company's directorship with Calasso, are venerated as important contributors in the struggle toward *sprovincializzazione*—the de-provincializing of an Italian culture that was still squeezed within the postwar limits of Marxist criticism and neorealism.

The founding of Adelphi has become a standard folktale in publishing circles; like all good yarns, it includes an escape and an abduction. The escape was from the rigid cultural canon of Einaudi Editore, the powerful Turin publishing house that dominated Italian intellectual life after the war. Throughout the fifties and sixties, Einaudi's orientation, as prescribed by its brilliant and charismatic head, Giulio Einaudi, was determinedly leftist. This position was understandable in a country that had so recently emerged from Fascism, but it left little room for experimentation, and at its most extreme it could take on an uncomfortably familiar tinge of censorship. Luciano Foà, a young Milanese-Emilian born into a literary family—his father was Augusto Foà, a well-known literary agent—had by the beginning of the nineteen-fifties become the *segretaria generale*, or publishing manager, of Einaudi, but by the end of the decade was starting to feel ever more strongly that the company was not producing the books he would like to see published. With his friend Bazlen, who

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occasionally worked as a consultant for Einaudi, he began to put together plans for a small, independent company that would take more chances.

The event that precipitated Foà's departure from Einaudi was a 1961 decision by the company not to go ahead with a proposal to publish for the first time in Italy a definitive edition of the collected works of Nietzsche. Received wisdom had it that the sensitive postwar atmosphere of an Italy still struggling to rebuild itself was simply not ready for Nietzsche. The historian Delio Cantimori, who sometimes gave Giulio Einaudi advice on books, wrote in a famous open letter that no publisher should publish Nietzsche, because Nietzsche was *diseducativo*, or "counter-educational." (Years later, Cantimori became a target of one of Calasso's essays.) Most members of Einaudi's editorial staff were of similar opinion. Giulio Einaudi himself, to his credit, did not seem unwilling to publish a few of Nietzsche's works, but he evidently did not want to embark on a controversial project so large and dramatic that it would affect the image of the entire company.

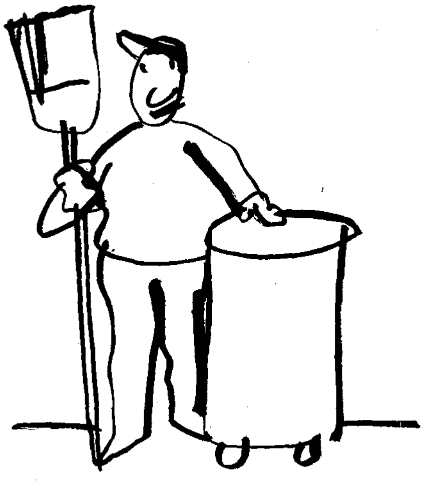
Foà had championed the Nietzsche project, and when it was turned down he took the opportunity not only to leave Einaudi but to bring the project into the Milan-based publishing company he was putting together with Bazlen. (The folktale has it that he "walked out of Einaudi with Nietzsche under his arm.") The Nietzsche series became the cornerstone of the newborn Adelphi.

Calasso says, as we sit in his office, "Every so often, Giulio Einaudi remarks to a journalist, 'Adelphi was taken like a rib from the side of Einaudi.' It's like saying that Marx was a rib from the side of Metternich! We did everything that Einaudi kept away from."

Calasso joined the newly founded enterprise in its first year, on his twenty-first birthday, when his friend Roberto Bazlen put into his hands, like keys to a kingdom, the first books to consider for translation. He began to go back and forth between Rome and Milan, and moved to Milan in 1968; since then his adult life has never been detached from Adelphi. It is significant that Bazlen, who was probably the closest thing to a kindred spirit in Calasso's life, was the animating force behind the publishing house that is now identified with Calasso. While the meticulous, self-effacing Foà brought practical experience and organizational ability to the project, Bazlen brought a quirky independent spirit, vast culture, trenchant judgment, and a talent for sniffing out good books in obscure corners of the world.

No one who knew Bazlen can quite define him. Born in 1902 into a prosperous half-German, half-Italian family in Trieste, he was a man who might have felt more at home in an earlier century: a leisured bourgeois of imprecise genius who had no need to earn a living, no interest in academe, and no ambition to write, and simply lived for books. In Italian literary circles he was a sort of éminence grise, a friend of notable writers and poets, and an endlessly curious reader who helped to popularize Italo Svevo and secured the first publication of Freud, Jung, and Kafka in Italy. (It was Bazlen who did the first Italian translation of "The Interpretation of Dreams.")

Calasso and Bazlen met in Rome in 1960, when the older man was living in a single room on Via Margutta filled almost entirely with books. There was forty years difference in their ages but each immediately saw in the other a like mind. Calasso was instantly fascinated by the mercurial brilliance of Bazlen's "rapid, almost telegraphic way of speaking" in a mixture of Italian, English, French, and German, and by something less easy to describe: an instinctive simplicity and clarity of insight that bordered on the mystic. In the Adelphi edition of Bazlen's collected letters and notebooks which was published after his friend's death Calasso writes, "He was Taoist in the immense agility of his mind, its constant flux that created order in movement.... There was in him the central point of emptiness that sustained all the rest."



It was that lively and exigent but strangely calm and ineffably cosmopolitan mind which conceived the vision that Adelphi continues to follow. An early list, published in 1965, shows a variety that is uncompromisingly Bazlen, including Edmund Gosse's "Father and Son," Alfred Kubin's "The Other Side," Dickens' "The Pickwick Papers," Bruno Bettelheim's "The Informed Heart," and Jan Potocki's "Manuscript Found at Saragossa."

"For a long time, at least the first fifteen years, Adelphi signified losing money," Calasso told a journalist a few years ago. "There was a general slowness in comprehension on the part of the public, who didn't understand where this thing was going." Fortunately, the succession of financial backers enlisted by the ever-practical Foà went from strength to strength: from Roberto Olivetti, in 1962, to the Falck clan of steel magnates in 1965, and, in 1968, to Carlo Caracciolo, an Italian newspaperman, who had the idea of financing a constellation of small publishers.

In the mid-seventies, Caracciolo, a Neapolitan nobleman who is a brother-in-law of Gianni Agnelli, passed his share in Adelphi to the financial arm of the Agnelli group. This arrangement, which holds to the present day, is a small publisher's dream. The Agnelli group is the minority shareholder, with forty-eight per cent of the stock of Adelphi—a connection that leaves Adelphi independent but allows it access to an efficient mass-distribution service offered by Fabbri, a powerful publishing company joined to Agnelli. It was the Agnelli connection that, in 1978, at the end of the terrorist decade in Italy, gave Adelphi the unique honor of being the only publisher denounced in print by the Red Brigades—who called the company "the point of the diamond of the cultural counter-revolution."

Late in the sixties came Adelphi's first best-sellers: Georg Groddeck's "Book of the It," in 1966; Konrad Lorenz's "King Solomon's Ring," in 1967; and "Black Elk Speaks," a compilation of conversations with a Native American holy man, transcribed by John Neihardt, in 1968. In

Italy, the atmosphere of neorealist parochialism had already begun to dissipate, as Feltrinelli published Lampedusa's "The Leopard," and Carlo Emilio Gadda grew in popularity, and there appeared a host of translations of foreign works that didn't fit into earlier categories. By the early seventies, Italian readers had grown adventurous. "Then," Calasso says, "we began to be able to finance good books with good books."

The growing public interest allowed Adelphi to begin to make a profit, and to continue to follow Roberto Bazlen's notion of publishing a line of books from all ages and all cultures, linked by a subtle thread of what he might have called excellence. Bazlen died, however, before he could see the great successes, and before his friend and intellectual heir had ever written a book. Nowadays, at home, Calasso types out his manuscripts on the faded Olivetti manual typewriter Bazlen bequeathed to him; in his Adelphi office, he sits surrounded by shelves holding yellowing volumes that were once part of Bazlen's private library. Briefly, I glance over these: a queer mixture, in all languages, of memoirs by unknown, forgotten people; Asian and European philosophy; detective fiction; classic children's books; pulp novels from the twenties and thirties. With these as witness, Calasso goes ahead with what he and Foà still call Bazlen's program—and that program has become Calasso's serpent of books. If one plays with the image, one can see it as a serpent coiled in a circle, biting its own tail, and, in the center of the circle, the empty space that defines the activity of Adelphi, the absent Taoist.

EARLY on a drizzly evening a few days later, I am sitting waiting for Calasso in Bar Magenta, not far from the Adelphi offices. Bar Magenta is a Milanese institution, a turn-of-the-century café with the run-down, funky atmosphere of a college-town pub: scarred tables, cavernous dark-wood rooms, English beer. It is one of Calasso's favorite bars. When he arrives, I am not surprised to find him once again looking different from the way he looked the last time I saw him. Wearing a raincoat, with a brown Indian scarf wrapped around his neck, and a pair of black-framed glasses, which he uses for driving, he looks much younger and cheerfully eccentric, like an undergraduate poet with a hint of Roy Orbison.

Over drinks, we talk about bars in Milan; about Jaye Davidson in "The Crying Game"; about the revealing necks of transvestites; about India, where Calasso and Fleur Jaeggy spent a night in a Tibetan monastery and at 3 A.M. were awakened by child monks chanting their prayers; about a modern erotic camp masterpiece of Indian literature called "Maharani." When we start to discuss his writing, his face grows concentrated and still.

"I talk about publishing, because it's a public profession and talking is part of the rules," he says. "But a writer who goes on too much about his work is really something dismal. I have always felt that writers should be a bit anonymous—what is important is in the books. Even when I was very young, I was never captivated by the image of the writer. I was too busy reading."

Calasso's writing does not grow out of

prod•i•gy (prod'ə-jē) *n., pl.* **-gies.** **1.** A person with exceptional talents or powers. **2.** Something extraordinary or rare. (Latin ***prodigium***, prophetic sign, omen.)

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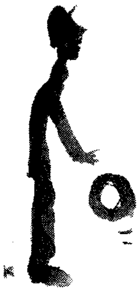
a romantic sense of himself as an isolated and unique observer of the universe but instead out of a vision that presupposes plenty of company—the throng of observant minds and souls he has always frequented in his reading. Aside from a stab at composing his memoirs when he was thirteen—an attempt possibly inspired by an overdose of Proust—his earliest writing was academic. His first published work was an essay on Adorno and Surrealism. His university thesis (while establishing himself at Adelphi he passed through the formalities of the University of Rome with the same absent-minded brilliance he had always displayed at school) was a two-hundred-and-fifty-page study of Sir Thomas Browne, which, in true Calasso style, drew on a vast number of sources, from Walter Benjamin to Walter Pater and Athanasius Kircher.

By the late sixties, Calasso had already developed his skills as an essayist by writing afterwords to Adelphi editions of Nietzsche, Benjamin, Kraus, Frank Wedekind, Max Stirner, Gottfried Benn, and other writers and philosophers he admired. His first novel, "L'Impuro Folle" ("The Impure Madman"), published in 1974, grew directly out of an editorial project—writing the afterword to the Adelphi edition of the memoirs of Daniel Paul Schreber, the Dresden judge and mental patient whose lucid, extravagant account of his experiences and fantasies inspired Freud's theory of paranoia and remains an essential document in the history of psychology. "I found for some reason that the essay wouldn't come, that there was something else in the way," Calasso says. "So I abandoned the essay, and the novel was the result, written in a month. It was a delirium inspired by a delirium."

"L'Impuro Folle," which received admiring, if slightly baffled, reviews in the Italian press, is a literary curiosity, a highly compressed—it is a hundred and thirty pages long—rhapsody on madness and history that charges along in a dozen different literary styles, from epic to comedy, from music-hall lyric to invented Gnostic text. Like Schreber's schizophrenia, the narrative leaps over barriers of time and space, sexual identity, and human morality. Through the tumult can be glimpsed a classic late-nineteenth-century conflict between two systems of order. One is manifested in the uncompromising rigidity of the Prussia of Frederick II; the other in the irrational truth of the madness into which Schreber escapes.

If this first book was the surprise result of a sudden contagious inspiration that flung Calasso into a wilderness outside the limits of scholarship, his second novel, "La Rovina di Kasch" ("The Ruin of Kasch"), published nine years later, was the fruit of a long, cumulative process of meditation and work. Yet the two contain the same elements: a phenomenal density of reference; a variegated style; a suspension of linear time; a sense of the compromises and contradictions inherent in the modern world—contradictions that imply a fall from some earlier state of unity. In "Kasch" Calasso examines that fall and its consequences. "What the book meant for me was in some way to touch the nerve of what is 'modern,' " he says. "To identify the difference between the modern and all the rest."

And so the book—like an explosion carrying sky-high the wreckage of a city—is an appropriately chaotic and fast-moving assemblage of anecdotes, fragments, citations, digressions, and aphorisms, their sources ranging from East to West, from ancient times to the late twentieth century. One minute, the reader is present at the Congress of Vienna; the next, in Cambodia under the Pol Pot regime. A D. W. Griffith cast of great men mingles Vedic sages with Marx, Sainte-Beuve, Stalin, Bentham, Stirner, Nietzsche, Freud, Goethe, Kafka, and dozens of others. One master of ceremonies dominates this movement: Maurice de Talleyrand, the notorious French diplomat and successful modern man, whose elegance, perfidy, and moral flexibility—a talent for serving convention—led him to political importance in every regime from the reign of Louis XVI through Revolution, Terror, dictatorship, Empire, restoration, and the bourgeois reign of Louis Philippe. This passage in France from the ancien régime to a new order is the historical event that is at the core of the book. "Calasso sees [this period] not only as the end of the Ancien Régime," Italo Calvino wrote, in a long, enthusiastic essay on "Kasch" in the magazine *Panorama Mese*, "but as the end of the cyclic, ritual world, the world of sacrifice, which becomes replaced by the world of Reasons of State, of experiments on society, of political trials, and of mass execution."



A central narrative illuminates the rest of the action: an ancient African legend that tells of the decline and fall of the powerful kingdom of Kasch after its high priests are persuaded by a storyteller to abandon their age-old ritual sacrifice of the king—a custom founded on the sacred magic that links the kingdom with the movement of the earth and the stars. The implication is that this severing of ties with the past and with the consecrated system of correspondences between Heaven and mortal society is a universal phenomenon, a human step into a profane existence that happens again and again, as we see it happen in France. Calasso suggests that, in whatever age it occurs, it implies dissolution, and a "modern" society that out of fragments must cobble together whatever certainties it can. Introducing the legend, he writes, "This is the story of the passage from one world to another, from one order to another—and of the ruin of one and of the other . . . the story of their perpetual ruin."

Calasso was fascinated by the Kasch story when he first came upon it, as a teen-ager, among the works of the German ethnologist Leo Frobenius. He intended the novel as the first of perhaps three books that had begun to take shape in his mind in the early seventies. They were to form not a series but a constellation: one ambitious work to be made up of several books, of different themes and different forms—books that could be read independently but would have significant links to each other. One of the volumes was to have as its point of departure another early source of fascination for him: Greece. Years later, that volume appeared as "Le Nozze di Cadmo e Armonia."

"Le Nozze" was Calasso's first public as well as critical success, a best-seller that owed its popularity, it was mysteriously, frivolously asserted, to female readers. What generated its instant and widespread appeal is obvious to anyone who begins to read it. Unlike the two previous books, which are difficult presentations of difficult themes, full of a thorny interplay of allusion that is heavy going for a reader not versed in the history of ideas, "Le Nozze" is limpid and easily approached. “The concept was that everything should be clear within the Greek system, which is quite self-sufficient,” Calasso says. “The reader could enter knowing nothing at all about Greek mythology. The form of the book is balanced, self-contained, a circle—the opposite of Kasch, which was centrifugal.”

But to call the book a retelling of Greek myth is to fall far short of the mark. It is more a felicitous revival in the most miraculous sense of the word: the re-illumination of traditional material through the inspired power of narration—what Ovid achieved in the “Metamorphoses.” At once luminously simple and enriched by layers of implication that one can follow as far down as one wishes, “Le Nozze” is free both of the air of scholarship and of a feeling of condescension to modern ignorance. One reads of the siege of Troy and of the Eleusinian mysteries with an absolutely present-tense sense of involvement and without the vague embarrassment one normally feels upon confronting “accessible,” modernized renderings, which are generally tainted by a flavor of twentieth-century psychology. In a serene, uniform language and a mannered, cyclic form—the book ends where it begins, with the abduction of Europa by Zeus—Calasso evokes an age of primal unity outside the line of historical time, an age defined by sacrifice and ritual, when the sacred was present in human life. It is a version of the world that was destroyed in “Kasch.” Read within the context of the earlier book, “Le Nozze” takes on a curious deepening of intensity: together, the two form a union that shows the amplitude of a creative vision governed by what the English scholar Hugh Shankland, in an essay on Calasso, called “an arcane faith in the interdependence of all experience.”

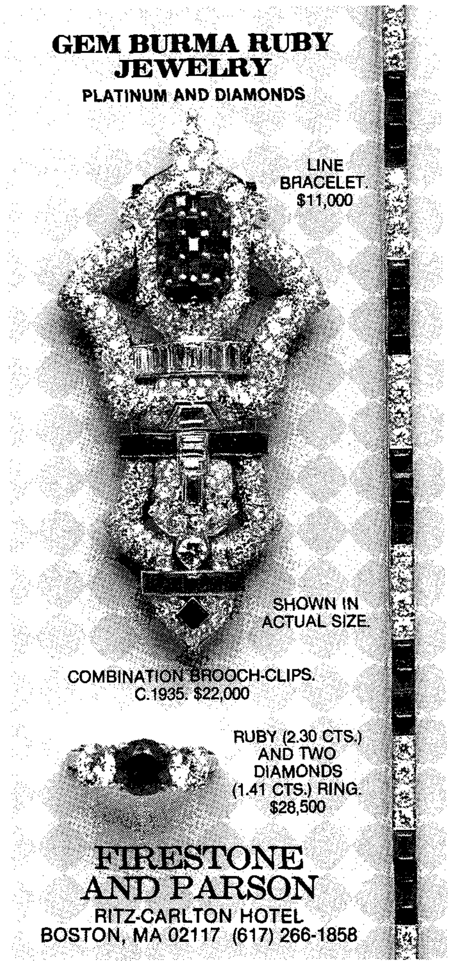
“My idea is that the form of a book should reflect the theme, no less than any of the separate statements it contains,” Calasso says. “In every book, the form should be such that it is good for that book alone. Closing that book, one closes accounts and goes off in a completely different direction.” The book he is writing now, which is the third in his constellation, will be unlike any of the others, he says. He doesn’t want to say any more about the new book, but he shows me a small notebook he keeps in his jacket pocket. “I’m always writing it: even in the middle of an editorial meeting an idea will come into my head and I’ll stop and put it down. The other night at the theatre, I filled two pages.”

He stubs out a cigarette and immediately lights another, and we start to talk about Greece, where Calasso has spent many vacations since he was fifteen. He describes the town of Olympia, in the Peloponnese, where he and Fleur spent the month of August for many years, and where he wrote part of “Le Nozze.” “There was a wonderful hotel there. It’s since been closed—taken over by the Greek state bureaucracy, which let it fall to bits. But it was wonderful: a grand hotel in the old style, built at the turn of the century for the Greek royal family. It was yellow and white, set in a beautiful garden overlooking the ruins, and hardly anyone ever went there except Fleur and me. I used to get up early, when it was cool, and go down to a big, deserted public room and type away for hours. There was a flock of waitresses and hotel maids, Greek country girls, dressed in uniforms out of the nineteenth century, long aprons and ruched caps, and they used to hang around the doors and stare at me as I worked.”

This lost paradise seems a marvellous setting for the birth of a book like “Le Nozze”; it also, with its flavor of Proust, its sense of impending desolation, its mixture of classical antiquity and the nineteenth century, makes an apt background for an old-fashioned picture-postcard view that for one second freezes Calasso—spied on by nymphs in Edwardian aprons while he types away on Roberto Bazlen’s typewriter.

I tell him that I think he is rather a fortunate man, and he doesn’t instantly, vehemently deny it, as most fortunate people do. “The thing is that I like the work I do,” he says simply. “All of it. There is a peculiar logic to it all.”

We finish our drinks and leave Bar Magenta. I get a taxi, and he heads back to his car, intending to stop by the Adelphi offices before he goes home. It’s still drizzling, and after he shakes my hand he pulls his scarf up over his chin, so that from my taxi window he looks deliberately anonymous, a man in disguise, able to assume any identity he wants to. ♦



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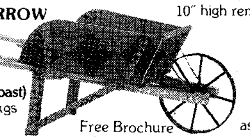

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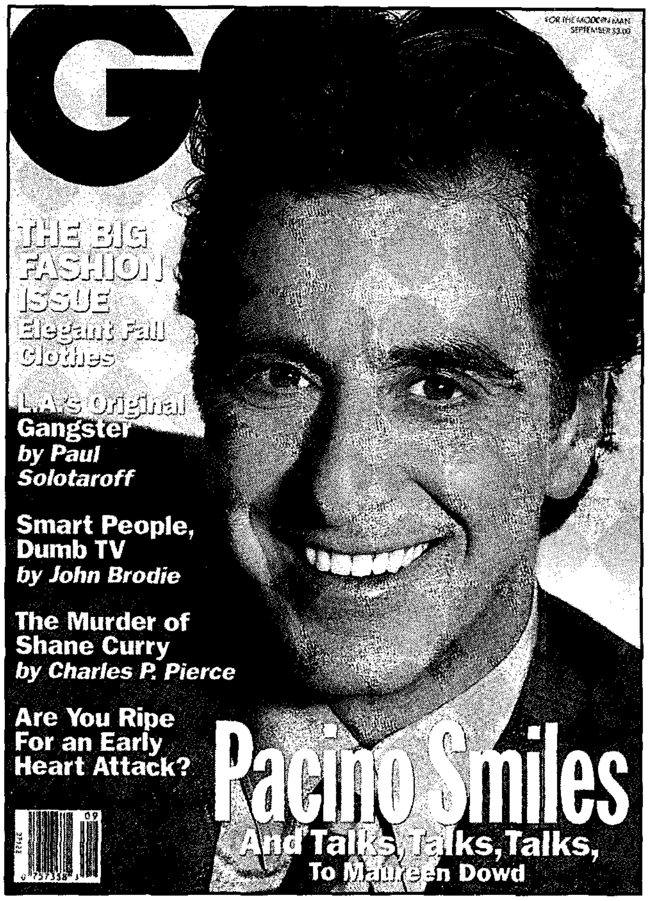
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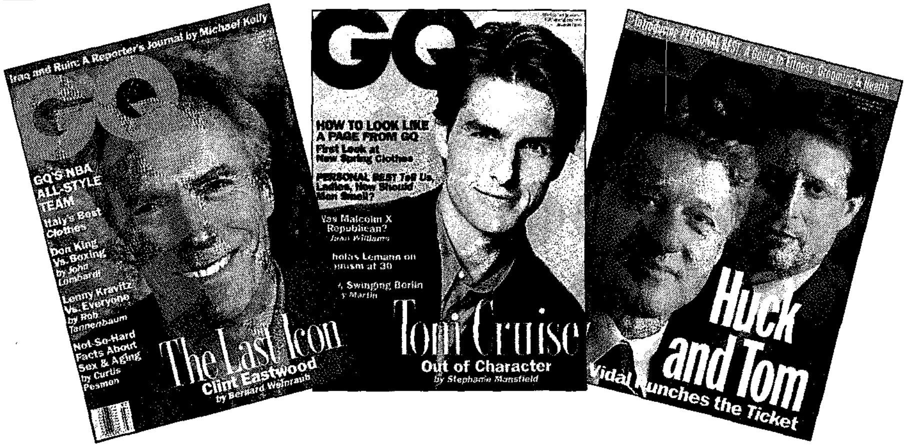
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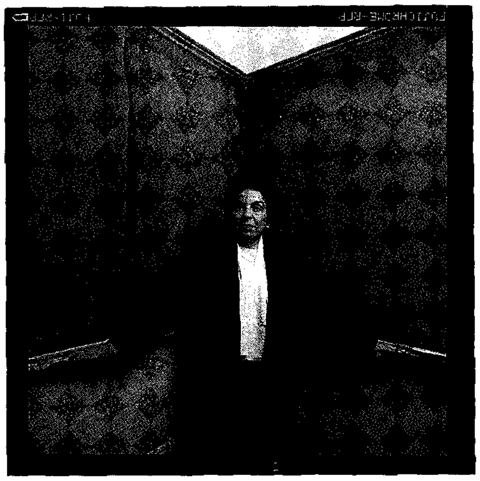
ANNALS OF POLITICS

THE SHALALA STRATEGY

Donna Shalala may be taking a back seat to Hillary Rodham Clinton in the health-care campaign, but she has a lot of experience waiting out the issue—and getting the last word.

BY JEFFREY TOOBIN

FOR Donna Shalala, President Clinton's Secretary of Health and Human Services and a leading member of Hillary Rodham Clinton's health-care-reform task force, March 15th began at 4:30 A.M. With Mrs. Clinton, Senator Tom Harkin, and Alice Rivlin, the Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Shalala was catching a government plane to Des Moines, where they would look at rural health-care problems for the task force. "As soon as the four of them got in the plane, they were talking a mile a minute about health care," another Administration official recalls. "Really detailed discussion. I mean, these people actually like talking about this stuff."



"She has always been very smart politically," Marian Wright Edelman says of Shalala. "She has a sense of what will sell. She's outcome-oriented."

JAMES SCHNEPF/GAMMA LIAISON

The official continues, "It was an incredibly gruelling day. They had coffee on a farm at nine—to talk with, you know, some 'real people' about their problems. And then everybody drives to Des Moines for a hearing. One expert after another, for six hours. And Shalala's sitting there, just lapping it all up. Finally, everybody heads back to the plane. Now, most people are dying at this point, just exhausted. It was really noisy in that front compartment in the morning, but in the afternoon no one is talking. As soon as the plane is in the air, Mrs. Clinton starts writing a few thank-you notes. Harkin is reading the wire-service reports of the day, and I think Rivlin goes to sleep. But Shalala—Shalala's still looking for someone to talk to. She walks behind the curtain, to where all the worker bees are sitting—the advance people, staff, and so on. And she goes over the whole day, laughing about silly things that people said, bragging about how she really stuck it to the pharmaceutical companies. And this just goes on and on, most of the way back to Washington. Eventually, even people back there are starting to fade out, and someone asks Shalala where she got all her energy. She thinks about it, starts walking back to her part of the cabin, and says, 'I have no internal conflicts.' "

If that is true, some of Shalala's critics say, it is because she is a political zealot, the "high priestess of political correctness." Certainly the executive branch has not seen the like of Donna Shalala for a very long time. She began her political career in 1975, as director and treasurer of the Municipal Assistance Corporation (MAC) during the New York City fiscal crisis, went on to become a high-ranking Carter Administration official, then president of Hunter College, and then chancellor of the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Her views are liberal, and they are well known: she is pro-choice and pro-Anita (indeed, she posted a bumper sticker in the chancellor's private bathroom in Madison which said, "Anita Told the Truth"). The new first couple of American liberalism, Peter and Marian Wright Edelman, are her devoted friends. Marian, the founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund, is one of

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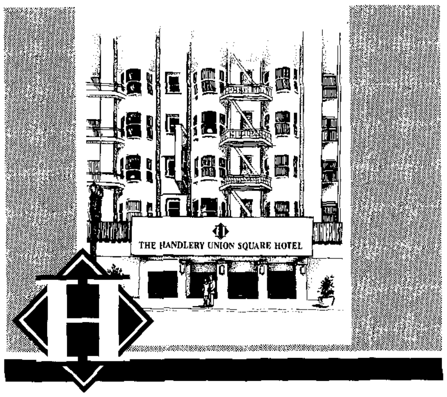
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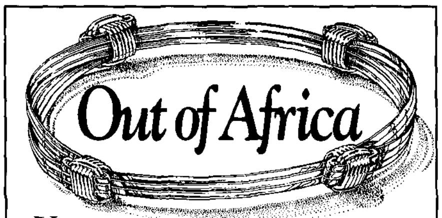

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Shalala's political mentors, and Peter, a former legislative assistant to Robert F. Kennedy, is her counsellor at Health and Human Services. Shalala's less celebrated friends also share her convictions. In Wisconsin, she became close friends with Dr. Elizabeth Karlin, who recently gave up a thriving internal-medicine practice to replace a retiring doctor who was one of the two physicians in Madison who performed abortions.

During the years when Shalala's politics were out of fashion in Washington, so was her job. Since Joseph Califano, Jr., served under President Carter (the title then was Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare), the Department of Health and Human Services has mostly been a sinecure for the politically exiled—Richard Schweiker and Margaret Heckler—or the militantly obscure—Otis Bowen and Louis Sullivan. Shalala is neither. She is already at the center of what could be the most ambitious domestic political agenda in a generation and she already controls an annual budget of five hundred and ninety billion dollars—more than any other member of the Cabinet. (Lloyd Bentsen, the Secretary of the Treasury, is a distant second with three hundred and two billion dollars.)

Shalala's power will grow exponentially if health-care reform becomes a reality, but the process won't be set in motion until Mrs. Clinton announces the findings of her task force, in May. That it is Mrs. Clinton, and not Shalala, at the helm of this effort has taxed the long friendship between the two women. A friend of Shalala's says, "Donna's very frustrated. Hillary's a friend. Hillary pushed to get her in the Cabinet. And now Hillary has taken the ball and run with it in Donna's area." Still, an H.H.S. official notes, "If the Clinton plan goes through, perhaps no Cabinet officer in American history will have had such an infusion of cash into his or her department. Think about it this way: everybody's health-insurance premium in the whole country would no longer go straight to the insurance company; it would go to Donna Shalala first."

I MET Shalala one afternoon in February at LaGuardia Airport, after she took the shuttle to New York for a meeting with the *Times* editorial board. She is dazzlingly short, an even five feet by her own generous estimate, and prone to laugh with a rumble that shakes her close-cropped hair and closes her heavily lidded eyes. A long-vowelled hint of her native city, Cleveland, lingers in her speech, but fifteen years in Manhattan have given her a New Yorker's fast pace. She is direct and unpretentious. As we walked briskly from the gate to her car, she whirled off course and jogged to the USAir counter to turn in frequent-flier coupons for herself and an aide, Avis LaVelle. "Hey, come on," Shalala said, laughing, "we're not going to work for the government forever."

The ironic fact is that her reputation is almost entirely misleading. For Shalala, the personal is not necessarily the political. Rather than being an extremist, she is a true Clintonian—more of a political operator, whose views both absorb and reflect the culture in which she finds herself.

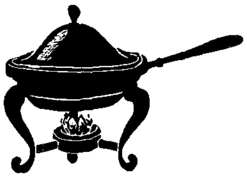
She talked almost exclusively about getting things done—about what would or would not pass Congress. Philosophical questions prompted little more than an impatient rubbing of the eyes. Marian Wright Edelman told me, "Donna is someone who pushes the limits of the possible. She has always been very smart politically. She has a sense of what will sell. She's outcome-oriented."

As long ago as the mid-seventies, Shalala had a reputation for being more liberal than she actually was. During the New York fiscal crisis, she was sometimes portrayed as being opposed to the budget-cutting that the MAC board, which was headed by the investment banker Felix Rohatyn, was imposing on the city. But Rohatyn says that Shalala "was very supportive, very tough-minded about the medicine the city had to take." At one point, Rohatyn remembers turning to Shalala in exasperation and saying, "What do you do to keep your humanitarian image when I'm hanged in effigy—and you vote for this stuff with more enthusiasm than I do?" But the notion of Shalala as a liberal extremist is fairly new, and it stems from her tenure at the University of Wisconsin. In seven years as president of Hunter, she had revitalized a campus decimated by the city's fiscal crisis. She completed two long-unfinished buildings, renovated the campus subway station, and lifted Hunter to academic preëminence in the New York City university system. In the light of that success, she had been a natural choice as the first woman to head a Big Ten university.

Shalala was not supposed to take office until January of 1988, but it was not her style to wait around until the schedule commanded her to show up for work. Throughout the previous fall, she made visits to Madison to size up her new turf. She learned a lot on those reconnaissance missions. The most important thing she learned was that the university was in crisis. "We were just going to be ripped apart unless we took a stand, drew a line in the sand, and said, 'We're going to be a better institution,' " she says. "The institution had to change on the issues of race and gender. We had to do something strong and bold, even though it was very high risk. It's always high risk when you open your mouth."

The crisis had begun with a single event, in 1987. Scott Norby was then a nineteen-year-old freshman who belonged to the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity. Around the turn of the century, someone realized that the first two letters of the fraternity's name, spoken together, sounded like "fee-gee." "So Fiji—like the Fiji Islands—became sort of a symbol for the frat, and we had a theme party every spring for the seventy-five to a hundred members and their dates," Norby says. "The house was decorated with sand, like a beach. Then we set up a waterfall on the stairs, which is pretty hard to do. We put up this ten-foot-tall plywood cutout in front of the house, which was like a caricature of the way cartoonists have depicted South Sea islanders. It had dark skin, and there was a bone through its hair. Then most of the guys got dressed up to sort of look like a Fiji Islander. Anyway, there were some students who saw the guys dressed up, and they were offended." Some of the students who objected were members of the Black Student Union. They staged a protest in front of the frat house. Tensions mounted. Eventually the university suspended the fraternity.

"The Fiji Islands party was definitely the one issue that was the lightning rod," Mary Rouse, the dean of students, who became a close adviser to Shalala, says. In June of 1987, the acting chancellor named a faculty-student review committee, which was chaired by the leader of the Black Student Union, Charles Holley. The Holley report, issued that October, included demands for, among other things, the appointment of a vice-chancellor for ethnic and minority affairs and the expansion of the ethnic-studies curriculum. The report also called vaguely (and fatefully) for expanded rules against racial and sexual harassment.



"The previous administration had promised a response to the Holley report right after the first of the year, so I didn't have any choice," Shalala says. But about a month after she became chancellor she released what she called the Madison Plan, which amounted to putting her own stamp on the Holley report. As university administrators and politicians have done from time immemorial, Shalala gave her constituents part of what they demanded. She rejected the vice-chancellor idea and generally shifted the focus away from what has come to be called multiculturalism. In its place she expanded the plan's conventional affirmative action guidelines, by setting goals and timetables for minority recruitment in both faculty hiring and student enrollment.

But Shalala's Madison Plan did not reject the Holley report's demand for a change in the rules on harassment. She directed a student-faculty disciplinary committee to evaluate campus rules on student conduct. What emerged from the committee's work was a rule that subjected a student to possible disciplinary action if he or she made "comments" that intentionally "demeaned," for example, the race or sex of another person and "created an intimidating, hostile or demeaning environment for education."

"The code intimidated and confused a lot of students," James Baughman, a professor of journalism, who calls himself a moderate Republican, recalled recently. "This was a big controversy on campus, and people were talking about it for a long time. So, whatever the technical meaning of the rule, a lot of students took it to mean that you could not say certain things." A few months after the code was put into effect, it was challenged in court by the American Civil Liberties Union. As a result of that court challenge, Shalala said, "I got nervous enough that we didn't use it." Finding for the A.C.L.U., a federal district judge struck down the code in its entirety as a violation of the First Amendment. "Content-based prohibitions such as that in the UW Rule, however well intended, simply cannot survive the screening which our Constitution demands," the judge wrote, on October 11, 1991.

"It was explained to me at the time that it wasn't a speech code," Shalala says. "It was one-on-one harassment, consistent with federal law in the workplace. And all we were doing was extending it to the campus."

Still, "in retrospect, given the way the code was treated and how people called it a speech code, when we never intended to do that, that was the one thing I wouldn't do again," she says. "The faculty was enthusiastic about doing it, so I would have had to buck the faculty. I think the institution would have been better served if someone had walked up to me and said, 'You know, you really ought to pull back on this. Maybe we ought to be a little more thoughtful.' No one did at the time, but that's not my excuse. Sometimes you make mistakes."

Luis Sequeira, a professor of plant pathology and bacteriology at Madison and a native of Costa Rica, says, "I was one of very few people on the faculty and staff to protest the speech code." Sequeira calls himself a lifelong Democrat, but during Shalala's tenure he served for a year as the president of the Wisconsin Association of Scholars, a generally conservative faculty group. "The way it works in Madison is that any time you feel that you can't go along with legislation that will supposedly protect minorities you're immediately labelled a racist," he says. "People are

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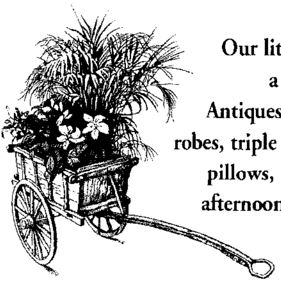

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terrified of being seen as racist or sexist. So people choose to be silent instead. Hardly anyone speaks out. There's no question that the Fiji Islands party was an ill-advised thing to do, but whether it merited all the upheaval is an open question."

Shalala, however, did not embark on the speech-code misadventure as part of a mission to impose "political correctness" in Wisconsin. Just as her constituents at Hunter had wanted a new subway station, her constituents at Madison had seemed to want limits on free speech—and Shalala was willing to deliver for both of them.

THE political-correctness faction was just one of several groups that made demands on Shalala in Madison. Another one, perhaps even larger, was the football fans. A series of losing seasons had led to a dramatic drop in attendance at Madison's Camp Randall Stadium, from about seventy-four thousand per game in 1984 to fewer than forty-two thousand in 1989. When Shalala took over, "the athletic program was a disaster," she told me. "We had no Notre Dame tradition, so we had to build a new tradition."

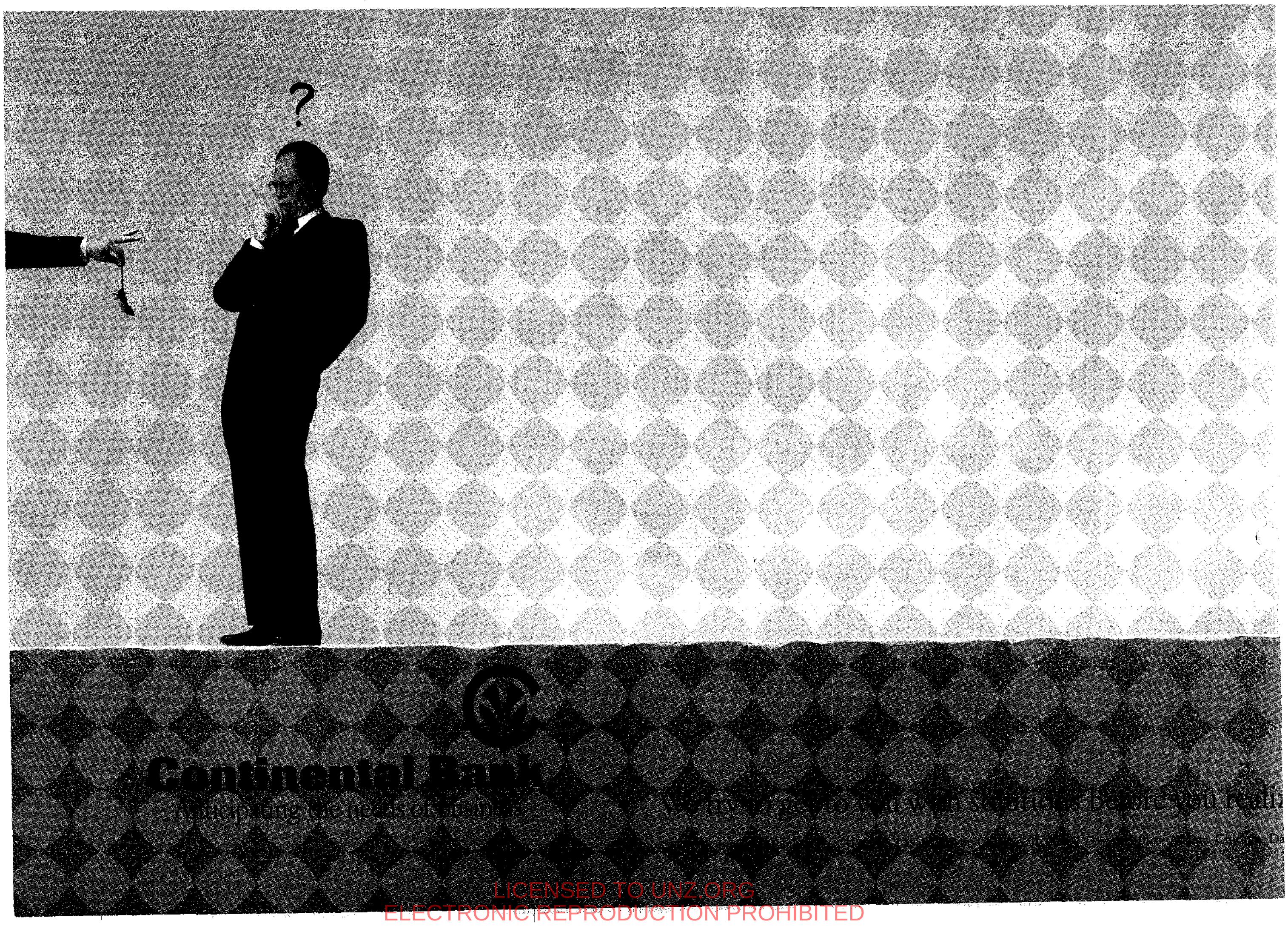
Shalala acted swiftly, replacing the football coach and the athletic director, and the results gradually started to show. The high point came on November 16, 1991, the day the Wisconsin Badgers played their arch-rivals, the Minnesota Golden Gophers. On that day, Wisconsin safety Mel Tucker broke up an almost certain Minnesota touchdown on the final play of the game to seal a 19–16 Wisconsin victory.

The following Monday morning, Shalala attended a meeting with her athletic director, Pat Richter. "Of course, everyone was still excited about winning the game in the last second," Richter says. "But Donna was more excited than anyone. She kept saying, 'Mel Tucker. That's my guy! That's my guy!' Mel was from Cleveland, like Donna, and she had taken a special interest in recruiting him. She had talked to his parents, spent time with them, and now he had won this big game for us." Indeed, the victory over Minnesota marked a turning point in the Wisconsin football program. By 1992, the Badgers had improved to the point where only a fumble in the final play of the season kept them out of a bowl game.

Shalala's passion for improving the Wisconsin football team was only part of her plan to revive the university, but she never underestimated its importance. "I had dinner with Donna just before she left for Madison," says her old friend Robert F. Wagner, Jr., who is the son of a New York City mayor and a former city politician himself. "And she had this huge stack of football magazines. She was studying up."

Barry Alvarez, who had been brought in as coach by Shalala, says, "I'd been an assistant coach at Notre Dame, which is pretty well known for supporting football, but I had never seen the kind of support Donna gave our football program. We would bring in seventy high-school recruits a year, with their parents. She would meet with every single one of them. That just doesn't happen."

In recognition of her effort in recruiting Mel Tucker, Alvarez presented Shalala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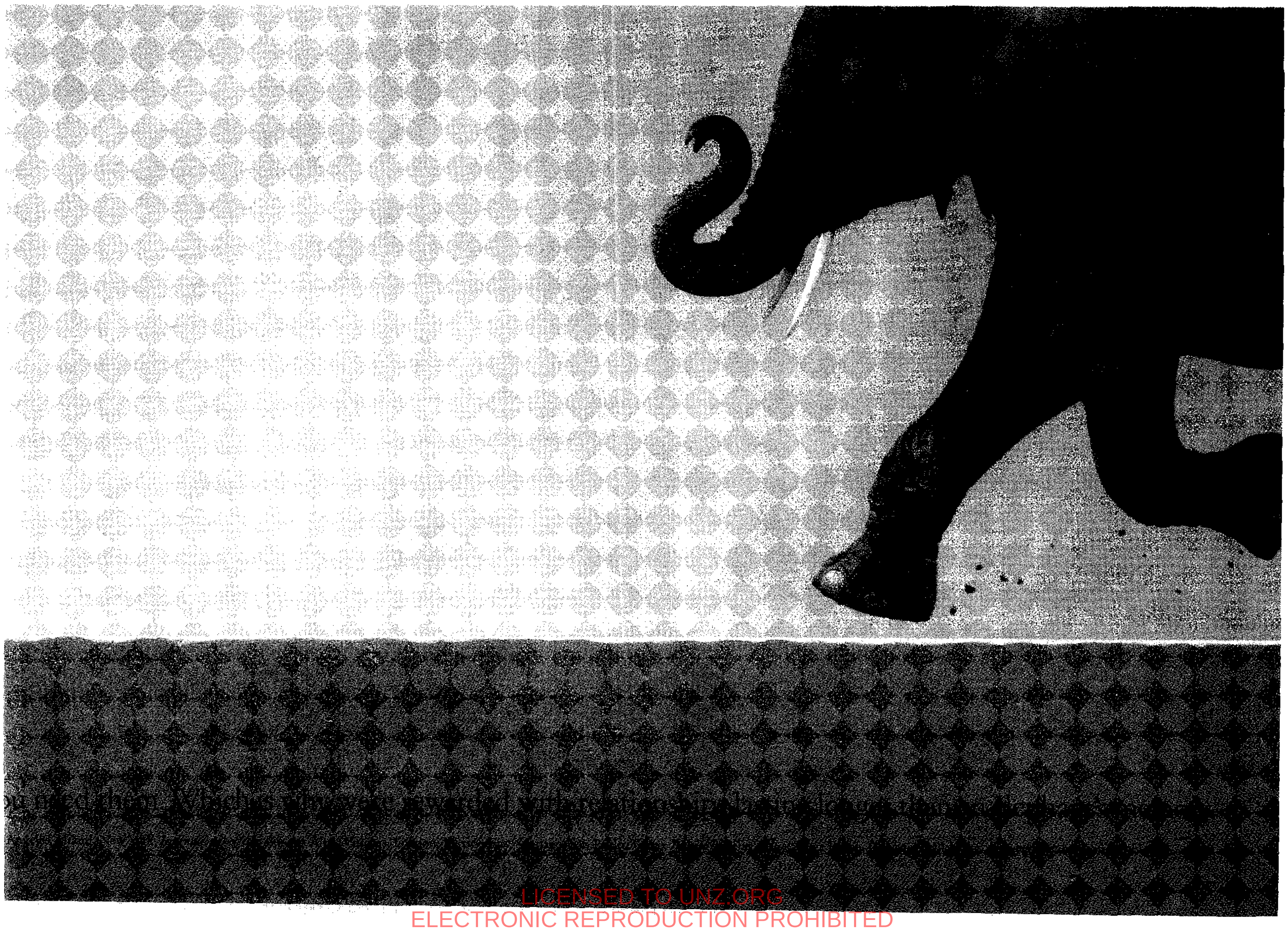
with the Minnesota-game ball, and today it sits in her office in Washington.

THAT energy and enthusiasm were apparent early in Donna Shalala's life. She was born in Cleveland in 1941 to parents of Lebanese descent. When she was eleven years old, she wanted to play first base in a summer softball league at the West Tech High School playground. "I told her she was too small, she couldn't do it, because the kids needed a big target," her coach, a Williams College student on break, recalls. "But she never let up on me. She kept asking, asking, asking. Finally, there was no saying no to her. I let her play first base." The coach never regretted it. "She was terrific—a real sparkplug. Never stopped talking, never let up, a real Phil Rizzuto type," the coach, whose name is George Steinbrenner, remembers. "And we wound up winning the city championship that year."

According to Shalala's friend Carol Bellamy, her mother, Edna, is "the only woman with more energy—and shorter—than Donna." Now eighty-one years old, Edna Shalala is a lawyer who still works full time. She recently hired a second lawyer in her practice and can now devote more time to playing in national tennis tournaments for people seventy-five and over. Shalala's father, who died when she was in graduate school, ran grocery stores, sold real estate, and was a leader in the Lebanese community. "My father was gregarious, like me, and a natural politician," Shalala says. She has a twin sister, Diane Fritel, who is a teacher and, with her husband and four children, operates a sixteen-hundred-acre farm in Rugby, North Dakota. "Both my girls always had a lot of energy," Mrs. Shalala says. "Donna sold tile hot plates for Junior Achievement and turned a profit. She graduated ahead of her class, and she always had a tennis racquet in her hand." After finishing college, in 1962, she joined the newly created Peace Corps and spent two years in Iran.

Shalala still plays a good deal of tennis, and she enjoys the outdoors. Her great passion, in fact, is the long, vigorous vacations she takes most summers with a group of other accomplished, networking women. The trips began with a suggestion from Shalala's friend Molly Ivins, the journalist, author, and professional Texan. "I first met Miss Donna when I was in my earliest days at the New York City *Times* and I was covering the ever parlous finances of N.Y.C.," Ivins told me. In 1978, Ivins moved to Denver as the *Times*' Rocky Mountain bureau chief, and she began calling her New York friends to say, "God damn you, you better get out here and see the most beautiful country on God's earth!" Ivins organized a raft trip for all her women friends, on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. "There are no street lights, and they all felt it was very dark out there," she recalls.

"One of the objectives of this trip was to catch fish," Ivins adds. "We had been trying for days to catch a fish, and no one had got so much as a nibble. I mean, we had not seen hide nor hair of a fish, to coin a phrase. So one day Donna—she's in my little boat—sees this already dead fish on the bottom of the river. Now, this fish was actually fairly recently



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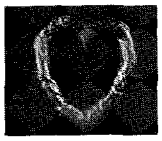

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deceased. This fish was not floating yet. So Donna's whispering to me, 'Go get that fish. Go pick it up.' So I reach down and get it. And then we get it in the boat and I proceed to attach a hook in this fish's mouth, and we put it back in the water and catch it, if you know what I mean. The next thing I know, Donna is beating that fish over the head with a bucket in order to subdue it. We won great cheers for catching that fish."

Shalala's network of women friends is in some ways a microcosm of the women's movement over the past two decades. Shalala moved to New York City in 1970, as an assistant professor at Baruch College, specializing in the then obscure field of municipal finance. But the fiscal crisis created an immediate demand for her expertise, and she was appointed to the board of MAC, thanks to her friendship with Wagner, who was, in turn, close to Hugh Carey, then governor of New York. On frequent trips to Albany, she would stay with Carol Bellamy and Karen Burstein, who were then state senators and roommates. "It was a time of great excitement—the height of the renewed women's movement," Burstein says. "We were all about the same age, and Donna was the only female who was a real player in resolving the fiscal crisis."

The politicians and journalists she met at that time form the heart of Shalala's network. They are all around fifty years old now, and, just as many of their peers in the corporate world have had once soaring careers stalled or diverted, several of Shalala's friends have hit a glass ceiling. Carol Bellamy served two terms as president of the City Council, but then lost a race for mayor and another for state comptroller. Now an investment banker, she is running for comptroller again. Karen Burstein lost a race for Congress and is now a judge in family court. Linda Winikow, another former state senator, is a vice-president of an upstate utility. Frustrated at the *Times*, Molly Ivins quit, and got the last laugh by becoming a best-selling author and syndicated journalist. Alice Rivlin sat out most of the years of Republican dominance in a think tank before being named to the No. 2 job at the Office of Management and Budget in December. Sarah Kovner, an activist from the Upper West Side, is now a special assistant to Shalala at H.H.S. Of all those in government, Shalala alone has reached a pinnacle.

In good times and bad, though, these women have gathered for yearly pilgrimages to obscure and beautiful corners of the globe. The destinations have ranged from the Gros Ventre Mountains, in Wyoming, to the Machu Picchu ruins, in Peru, and the Himalayas. There is no formal agenda. "It's nothing planned—we're not talking about Renaissance Weekend here," Bellamy says, referring to the Clintons' rather tendentious annual New Year's party-cum-policy-seminar on Hilton Head Island. "When we hike, Donna's always last, which she says is because of her short legs. But you can always tell where she is, because she's always wearing a Wisconsin T-shirt—bright red." The participants like to tell stories about Bellamy pretending to campaign among uncomprehending Nepalese villagers and Shalala distributing pencils bearing the Wisconsin mascot to equally perplexed locals elsewhere. But the trips had a serious repercussion for Shalala, in, of all things, a debate in Madison about the Reserve Officers Training Corps. In that context, the vacations became a focal point for questions about Shalala's sexual orientation.

"R.O.T.C. is an old, old issue on campus," Mary Rouse, the dean of students, says. "For at least fifteen years, people have been trying to get the Defense Department to change their exclusionary policy for gays and lesbians. Donna's position was clear from the beginning. Her position was: This discrimination is wrong, and it's not a question of whether the policy will change but when. But her problem was that the contract for R.O.T.C. was between the Department of Defense and the university's board of regents."

Gordon Baldwin is a conservative law professor at the university. He is bemusedly aware of how out of place his politics are in Madison. "I'm a big rebel here," he says. "You know why? I have lunch with the Rotary Club every week." He is also the director of officer education for the R.O.T.C. program on campus. "Donna was always absolutely straightforward with me," he says. "On the merits, she was opposed to the ban on gays, but she also said that she wanted to make sure that the university did not take any unilateral action. She had to walk a fine line. She was in the middle of a big fund drive for the university with Robert Froehlke, who is a big insurance executive and a former Secretary of the Army. Donna was clearly told that getting too far out in front on R.O.T.C. would cost the university millions in donations."

Joseph Elder and Michael Olneck are sociology professors who joined a fight to kick R.O.T.C. off campus. Elder says, "It just seemed incongruous and wrong to me that both the university and the State of Wisconsin had laws banning discrimination against gays, and the military was getting away with flagrantly violating them. I started to organize an effort to get a meeting of the full faculty on the issue of whether we should request that the board of regents evict R.O.T.C. There hadn't been a meeting of the full faculty for about twenty years. It became a very big deal."

The meeting was held on December 4, 1989. More than half of the faculty attended, and the motion that R.O.T.C. be evicted from the campus passed by a comfortable margin. "The press asked Donna her reaction, and she answered very carefully," Elder says. "She said she was proud of how the faculty handled it. She didn't say that she was for throwing out R.O.T.C."

"Donna had a problem after the vote," Baldwin, the R.O.T.C. representative, says. "She saw that the faculty was far in advance of where the population of Wisconsin was on this issue. So she said the issue was so important that she wanted a mail vote of the full faculty. That did a couple of things. It sort of slowed down the process and allowed passions to cool. It was more like a secret ballot and it brought out more support for the program than the public meeting did."

The board of regents ultimately rejected the eviction proposal. "And Donna did not support us there, because she wanted to see R.O.T.C. integrated," says Michael Olneck. "That infuriated a lot of the student activists on the issue. I have absolutely no doubt that Donna was highly committed to doing whatever could be done to end the ban on gays in the military. She was going to be very political about it in terms of her assessment that these things take a long time. The thing is, she could have just dropped the issue after we lost in the board of regents. But she didn't do that.

"You know what he's like—he's a guy!"

• •

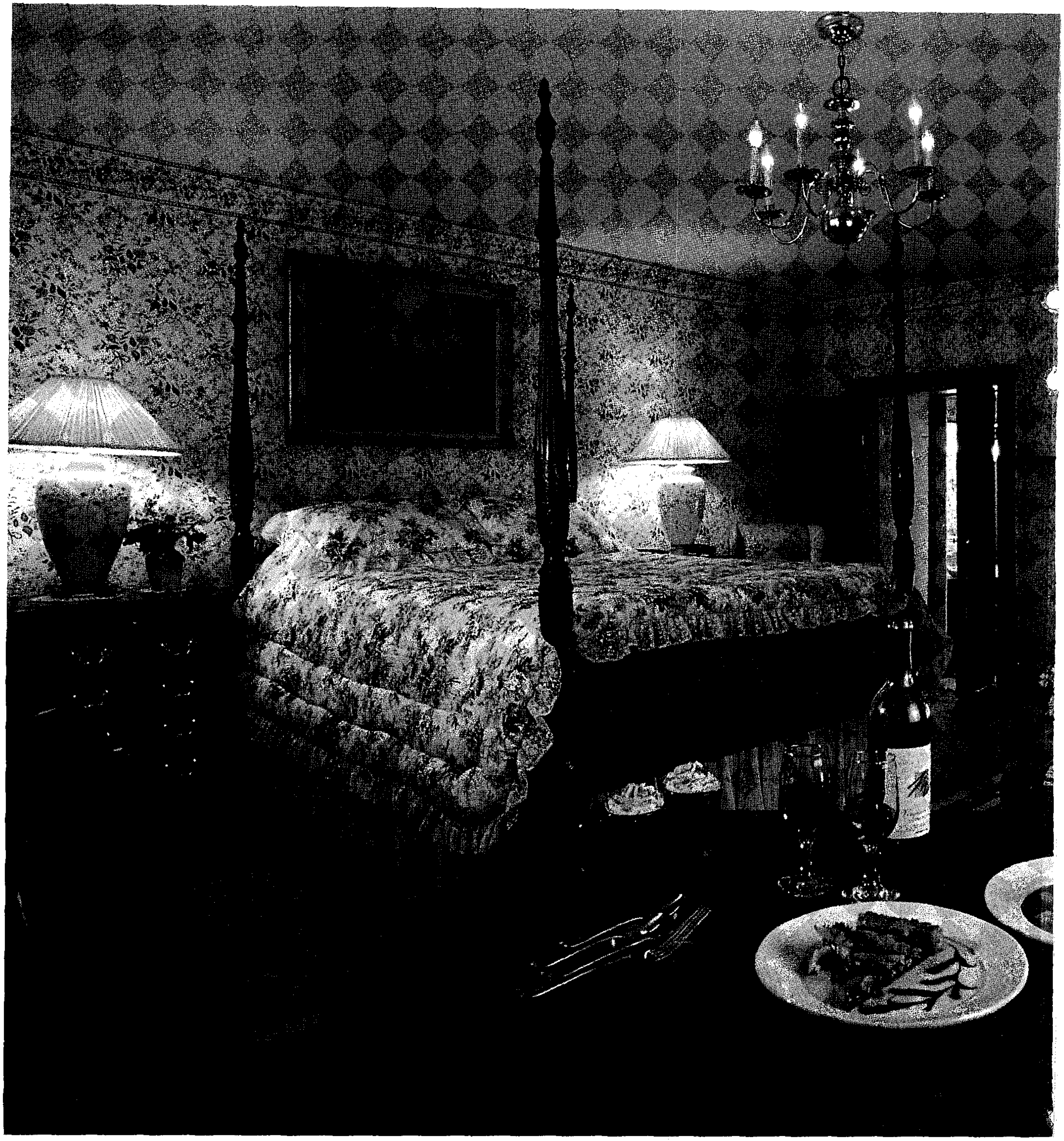
"I was appointed to chair a university task force on discriminatory practices in R.O.T.C. The university paid for me to go to a conference on R.O.T.C. that the American Civil Liberties Union held in Minnesota. There was a plenary session for about a hundred people; Miriam Ben-Shalom got up to make a speech. I had never met her, but she's very prominent as a gay-rights activist who had been discharged from the Army for being a lesbian. So Miriam got up and essentially trashed Donna for being a hypocrite. It was an 'outing.' She said, 'Here you have a lesbian chancellor who is not supporting the removal of R.O.T.C. from the campus.' She was extremely vitriolic. And there was a kind of hush in the room but no real follow-up." The "outing" was reported in the *G.L.C. Voice*, a now defunct gay publication in Minneapolis.

"Right after the conference, I called Mary Rouse to alert her that this incident had taken place," Olneck says. "Later, Donna called me and wanted a description of the Ben-Shalom incident. It didn't seem to come as any surprise to her. Whatever anger she might have felt she did not express. She just told me that it wasn't true—that she was not a lesbian."

Ben-Shalom told me recently, "I thought Shalala was profoundly morally perverse and bankrupt in her position on R.O.T.C., and I thought there was a great deal of hypocrisy in her position on the issue. I did not intentionally out her at the conference, but at that time I thought it was common knowledge that she was a lesbian, and I said that at the conference. I don't consider it an insult to be called a lesbian, but if I am wrong about Shalala being one, then I am sorry that I said what I did."

The outing campaign picked up in earnest when Shalala was named to the Cabinet last December. The all-women vacations were suddenly being cited as evidence. Michael Petrelis, a gay-rights leader with the group Queer Nation, began calling reporters and telling them Shalala was a lesbian. "I tried to out her," he says. "I didn't do it because of her hypocrisy on R.O.T.C. but because we in the gay community need visibility. Closet cases like Shalala send the message that there is something shameful about being a lesbian."

Shalala was asked about the Queer Nation campaign in an interview with the editorial board of Madison's *Capital Times*. In a December 30th article headlined "GAY GROUP DOGS SHALALA WITH



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TRAVEL GUIDE

I N I A

PHONE CAMPAIGN," she was quoted as saying, "Have I lived an alternative life style? The answer is no." The Associated Press distributed the story nationally, and *Newsweek* printed Shalala's remark in its Perspectives section on January 11th. Phil Haslanger, the editorial-page editor of the *Capital Times*, says, "We asked Shalala about the outing earlier, when the whole campaign started. We never printed her answer, but she was absolutely categorical in her response. She said, 'I've got nothing to hide. I am not a lesbian.' "

Her friends agree. "There is no 'out' to out about Donna," Carol Bellamy says, and Molly Ivins says, "Donna's interested in men. She's very aware of what you have to give up in order to get ahead when you're a woman. She looks at her sister's family and sees what she's missed."

Characteristically, after it was clear that R.O.T.C. would stay on campus Shalala lobbied Congress against the military's gay ban. And she lobbied with vigor. "She was the best university head we had on Capitol Hill," William Rubenstein, director of the A.C.L.U.'s national Lesbian and Gay Rights Project, says. Shalala also rallied her fellow college and university presidents to urge the government to end the gay ban in the military. "No one worked harder or did more to organize the university presidents on this issue," Rubenstein adds.

"I didn't make anyone happy about R.O.T.C.," Shalala says. "There were a lot of people who were pretty mad at me. It is my position that we ought to change public policy but not throw R.O.T.C. out. When I said to everybody that my preference was we would try to change the rule, I meant it. And I delivered. I worked hard at doing that. I try to keep my word."

On January 14, 1993, Shalala appeared before the Senate Finance Committee for her confirmation hearing. "I told Donna that this was the day she had been preparing for her entire life," Marian Wright Edelman says. About that, there can be little dispute. "Donna understands the way power works," Karen Burstein says. "Getting people to talk about you and have your name reverberate in other circles." Shalala's assiduous networking is much noted by her friends. Dall Forsythe, a former government official in New York who is now a professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, recalls, "When I started a job in investment banking, I was assigned an office where the previous occupant had abandoned a double-wheel Rolodex. It had room for thousands of names, and the only person who knew enough people to actually fill it was Donna. So I sent it to her. She didn't even think it was funny; she thanked me and said she could use it." Shalala is democratic about whom she courts. While at Madison, she even gave an interview to the *National Enquirer*, which resulted in a story that began, "Pint-size Donna Shalala is a real giant in the academic world."

Her opening months in the Cabinet, though, have been somewhat rocky, largely because the point person on health care has been Hillary Rodham Clinton, not Donna Shalala. Shalala told me that she first met the Clintons about twenty years ago. "I met them two ways," she said. "One was through Harold Ickes and Susan Thomases"—prominent New York lawyers who were involved in the campaign. "And, second, Hillary and I have worked together over the years on the board of the Children's Defense Fund."

An Administration official says, "Everybody thought that when Shalala came in, it was going to be the Donna and Hillary show, but it sure hasn't worked out that way. Actually, there's a lot of tension between them. They're sort of competitive. The President is the one who really loves Shalala. He has total respect for her." In the early weeks of the Administration, Shalala sought to stake out an independent position on health care, which brought a swift rebuke from the White House. "Mack McLarty, the White House chief of staff, gave Shalala a real dressing down about doing end runs around the White House," an official says. "He told her she had better get with the program." Shalala's independent streak surfaced again last week, when she floated the idea of paying for health-care reform with a value-added tax, leaving the White House scrambling to say that that option was but one among many.

The distance from Mrs. Clinton may be somewhat more painful because it evokes the single interruption in the otherwise relentless upward arc of Shalala's career. At the beginning of the Carter Administration, she served as Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development for Policy Development and Research. As she and her friends have described it, that experience was difficult—a more or less continuous series of turf battles. Shalala once told the *Daily News* she was so frustrated in Washington that there were days when she cried herself to sleep at night. "Washington was a searing experience for her," Carol Bellamy says. "She realized that, as smart as you are, people can still cut you off at the knees." Thus, Shalala is, as an Administration official puts it, "very zealous about protecting her turf." Even if the health-care proposal is being controlled more by the White House than by H.H.S., Shalala will make sure she has some leeway in putting it into effect.

It is all a long way from the days when Bobby Wagner was introducing Shalala to New York political life. "When I ran for City Council in 1973, Donna would go with me from one political club to another," he recalls. "She had never seen that world before." Few people have been as important in Shalala's life—and, especially, in her career—as Wagner. Besides recommending her for the MAC board, he put her name up for the Hunter job. A diminutive, owlish man, whose own political skills always lagged well behind his intellectual gifts, Wagner is now working in a market-research firm with Louis Harris. He did, however, serve as Shalala's escort over the Inaugural weekend in Washington. "It was remarkable to me how Donna knew everyone," he says. "We ran into Ann Richards, and, of course, Donna had gone to England with her, and they were old friends. Finally, on the morning of the Inauguration, we went with the Cabinet from the White House to the Capitol for the ceremony. We sat up on the platform a couple of rows behind the President when he was being sworn in. It was a very moving experience. After the ceremony, we were standing out there, and Donna started introducing me to Senator Kennedy and Senator Dole, and I said to myself, 'My, how times change.' " ♦

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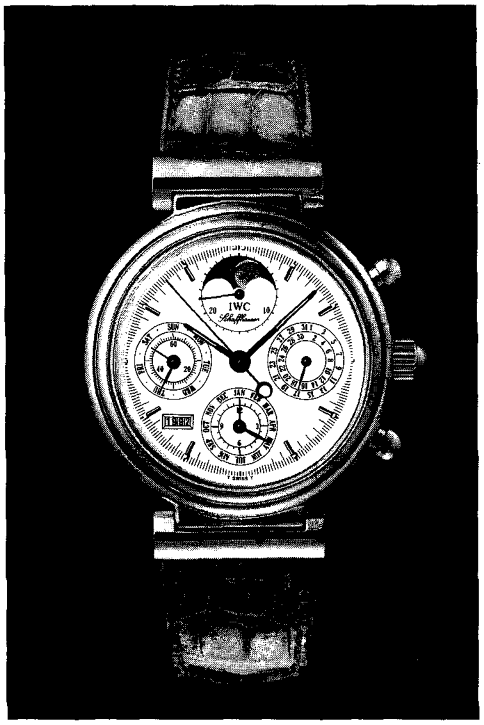

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

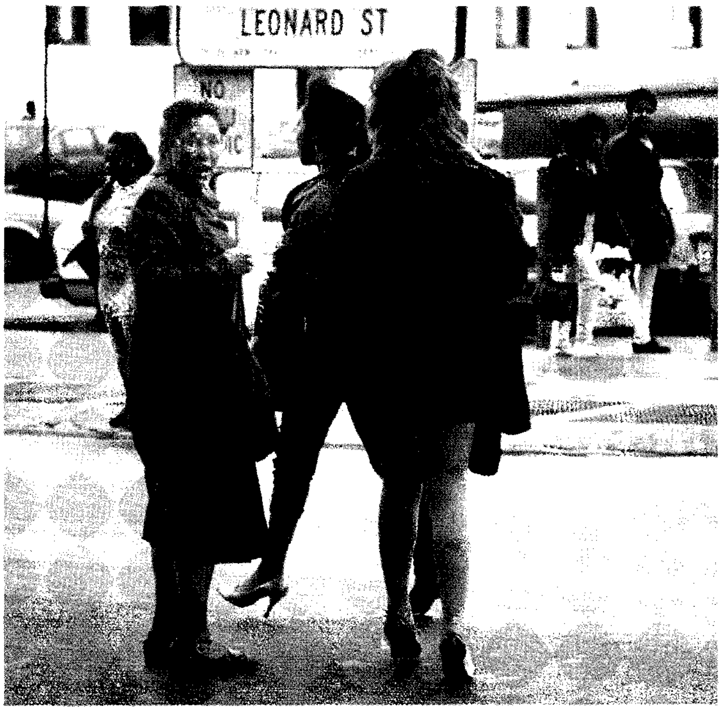
WOMEN ON THE EDGE

The prostitutes of New York have been afflicted by homelessness, physical abuse, drugs, AIDS, and the contempt of a society that chooses to ignore them. Now they have a champion. Dr. Joyce Wallace is fighting to reclaim their lives and pressuring the medical and judicial establishments to take action.

BY BARBARA GOLDSMITH

EMBLAZONED in red letters on the white Dodge van are the words "LifeStyles Care-Van, Sponsored by LifeStyles Condoms," and underneath, in brown letters, "Foundation for Research on Sexually Transmitted Diseases." Inside in the rear is a comfortable couch, which has been covered with a terry-cloth bath sheet ever since the day a streetwalker urinated on it. In front of the couch is a round table resembling a ship's table, with small inserts that once held glasses; now they hold plastic cups containing venipuncture needles and butterfly needles, which are smaller and shorter than regular ones, for women whose veins are hard to puncture because of drug use. Other containers hold alcohol swabs, Band-Aids, and cc. vials for blood. On the floor are cartons filled with questionnaires and educational pamphlets on AIDS; rubber gloves and masks; and neatly arranged packages of condoms in plastic bags. A poster of Whoopi Goldberg proclaims, "Don't die of embarrassment . . . use a condom." Another poster says, "During sex, use a latex condom and a lubricant with nonoxynol-9."

Dr. Joyce Wallace, a perpetually disorganized crusader for streetwalking prostitutes, sits in the front passenger seat. This evening alone, she has managed to misplace a copy of data she recently compiled on the incidence of H.I.V. infection in crack-addicted prostitutes; her sandwich supper; and—twice—her huge red-rimmed glasses. Wallace is a pale, stocky middle-aged woman with thinning short red-brown hair. As the driver of the Care-Van, Ricardo Ayala, stops it at the corner of Stanton and Allen Streets, on Manhattan's Lower East Side, three shabbily dressed streetwalkers approach Wallace's window. She hands them condoms. When they leave, one calls out to the driver, "So long, Ricardo! See you next week!"



Wallace and her team have administered the H.I.V. test to more than three thousand streetwalking prostitutes in New York City. "They are our responsibility," she says. "These are not throwaway women."

DAN BRINZAC/NEW YORK POST

On the next corner, a painfully thin woman climbs into the van. She has scabs on her nose and forehead and a barely healed gash on her right cheek. "If I take the test, do I get the McDonald's?" she asks, referring to a ten-dollar McDonald's food coupon that Wallace and her staff give women who agree to take an H.I.V. test.

"Sure," Wallace says.

"No way my dates will know?" (A "date" is a john.)

Dr. Wallace moves toward the couch, a test form in her hand. "No, it's confidential. You have to give your name, any name you want, and we give you a number. You can get your results from us in a couple of weeks, and we'll give you another ten-dollar coupon." She adds casually, "So what happened to you?"

"Some crazy guy tried to rape me, and when I fought back he knocked me down and kicked me in the face. Everything kinda got rearranged."

Wallace hands her a card. "If you want, you could drop by my office. It won't cost you anything."

The van heads toward Broadway. In the back, Larry Palmer, a phlebotomist and the newest member of the Care-Van staff—he is a young black man with huge brown eyes—toys with the needles he uses to take blood. Palmer explains that he wants to go uptown with Wallace because he's looking for a particular streetwalker, a little blonde who had approached the team the previous week. "When I say little, I mean little—she was under five feet," Palmer says. "She looked so beautiful, but when she got up close I could see she had open sores on her face and all around her mouth—she was wearing a scarf to hide them. She told a story about being raped at fourteen by her stepfather and running away from home and taking up with a woman lover who did drugs. Then they started doing drugs together, but once she did a lot her lover kicked her out. She says she doesn't care anymore—she's given up. She uses any needle, she says—she just picks them up from the ground and if they're not blunt she uses them. She wouldn't even take a bleach kit. I tried to get blood from her, but she was dehydrated and I couldn't find a vein. I thought Dr. Wallace could—she's better at it than I am. I thought maybe Joyce could turn her around."

The van parks on Ninety-eighth Street just off Broadway. In the next two hours, several girls enter it. They come to be tested or to get their test results from a big red book that Ricardo Ayala holds. When one asks for her results, Ayala replies that she received them two weeks ago.

"Yeah, but I'm hungry. I need the McDonald's." It's a familiar refrain. Many streetwalkers ask to be retested or claim not to have received their results, so they can get the food coupon.

"I can't," Ayala says.

A girl visibly pregnant and wearing tattered bluejeans asks if this is a free health clinic. When Wallace tells her it isn't, she begins to cry. She is followed by a black woman with cornrow braids who has a tiny diamond stud in her nose. In answer to a personal-information questionnaire, she tells Wallace she has three children, seventeen, eleven, and ten. Then her words are cut off by a fit of coughing.

"Have you had that looked into?" Wallace asks.

"Yeah. They diagnosed me with t.b. at Brooklyn Hospital."

"Are you taking your medicine?"

"Taking it? Hell, no. I can't even sell that shit."

The van cruises upper Broadway while Palmer looks for the blonde. There's considerable activity. Women dash out into the street to flag down cars. On the side streets, in parked cars, one can see heads bobbing up and down. A girl jumps out of one parked car and into another so quickly that she might be in a "Road Runner" cartoon. "The compact Japanese car has transformed the sex business," Wallace remarks. "What they do is fellatio. Under the circumstances, you can't do much else."

At approximately 1 A.M., Wallace turns to Palmer and says, "About that girl, forget it for tonight," and the Care-Van heads back downtown. As it nears its lot, on East Houston Street, it passes a girl in a trenchcoat, which she opens, with the regularity of a windshield wiper, to reveal her naked body.

MRS. VINCENT ASTOR, splendid in tailored blue jersey with a discreet sapphire-and-diamond pin perched on her right shoulder, stands under a seventeenth-century Flemish tapestry in the Trustees Room of the New York Public Library. A hundred and twelve guests have gathered for the presentation of the Brooke Russell Astor Award, which was endowed in 1987 by David Rockefeller in Mrs. Astor's honor. The award consists of ten thousand dollars, accompanied by an honorary citation, to an unsung hero who has contributed substantially to improving the quality of life in New York City. Mrs. Astor, reading from a typed sheet, lists the accomplishments of the winner, Dr. Joyce Wallace. In the last three years, as executive director of the Foundation for Research on Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Inc. (FROST'D), she has provided direct social services to streetwalking prostitutes and has embarked on a crusade to halt the spread of AIDS. Her efforts include the Care-Van, from which she provides free condoms, safe-sex education, H.I.V. testing, and food coupons; the Off the Street Mobile Unit, a Winnebago equipped to deliver social services; a needle-exchange project, offering sterile needles to addicts; a shelter for homeless people with AIDS; and a project at the Manhattan Criminal Court known as the Treatment Readiness Program, an alternative-sentencing program, which offers education in substance abuse, AIDS prevention, and drug-treatment referrals. When Mrs. Astor finishes rattling off all this information, she looks over at Dr. Wallace and remarks, "My goodness, how in the world do you have time to do all this?"

The answer to Mrs. Astor's question is that she doesn't. In spite of many sixteen-hour workdays and ambitious (some say too ambitious) plans, some of the projects mentioned have not come to fruition, possibly because Joyce Wallace tends to be viewed as an eccentric zealot who deals with an illegal, transient, and frequently despised group of women. As in the early days of the AIDS crisis, when the establishment failed to respond, the burden of activism has fallen not to the most skilled or organized but to those who care. Wallace, one of the few who target the streetwalking population, will receive over a million dollars this year in grants. Throughout history, prostitutes have been perceived as vectors of infection, and much of the money comes from people who fear that these women will transmit the AIDS virus to their male clients, who, in turn, will carry it home to wives and lovers. Wallace is canny enough to realize this, and her grant proposals stress that her work will prevent the spread of AIDS both "to and from" prostitutes. On the surface, statistics support this supposition: authorities estimate that there are from five to eight thousand streetwalking prostitutes in New York City. Wallace says these women tend to inflate the number of the men they service, but just three contacts a day five days a week for a year by just five thousand streetwalkers would add up to 3.9 million contacts. However, her statistics also indicate that seventy-five per cent of these contacts are limited to fellatio, an activity that clearly puts a woman more at risk than a man: common sense tells us that the AIDS virus gains easy entry through mouths lacerated from crack smoking. Studies indicate entry is also gained through unprotected vaginal and anal intercourse and through the sharing of "works" with infected substance abusers. (The proportion of I.V.-drug-using prostitutes who are H.I.V.-positive is staggering: 61.2 per cent.) A recent National Research Council report on AIDS concluded that female prostitutes are not spreading the disease. A study by Wallace of male clients of prostitutes found that of men who engaged in no other type of risk behavior less than one per cent were H.I.V.-positive.

In the past three years in the Care-Van, Wallace and her staff have tested and interviewed more than three thousand streetwalking prostitutes. The group is half black, a quarter Hispanic, a quarter white. The average age of the streetwalkers is twenty-nine, the average education eleventh grade. Half have no fixed address. Almost three-quarters use illegal drugs. (National studies show that seventy-eight per cent of prostitutes underwent forced sexual intercourse before the age of fourteen, usually with a relative or someone close to the family.) Most have been battered or abused. In New York, seventy per cent are mothers, having, on an average, two children. After this, because of infections such as gonorrhea or syphilis, these women often become sterile. Only ten per cent of the children live with their mothers. Over all, thirty-five per cent of the prostitutes Wallace has tested are H.I.V.-positive. "Many people just want these women to disappear—they've dehumanized them and turned their backs on their suffering," Wallace says. "These women represent the failures of our society. They are the product of two decades of inadequate schools, dysfunctional families, domestic violence, incest, and, for that matter, the repressive ignorance of the Catholic Church. They are our responsibility. These are not throwaway women."

New York's prostitute population is far from homogeneous. Some of the women sell sex for money, others for drugs; still others use sex to survive. Streetwalking prostitutes live in a vastly different world from call girls, who often refer to themselves as "sex workers" and tend to have a somewhat predictable private clientele. Escort-service girls also consider themselves superior to streetwalkers. Houses of prostitution are stratified as well, from the rarefied Belle de Jour, where men act out sexual fantasies, to the brothels of Park Avenue, Third Avenue, and the Lower East Side; in Queens, there are also the South American illegal-alien women of Flushing and the Korean ones of Jackson Heights, who are conscripted as sex slaves.

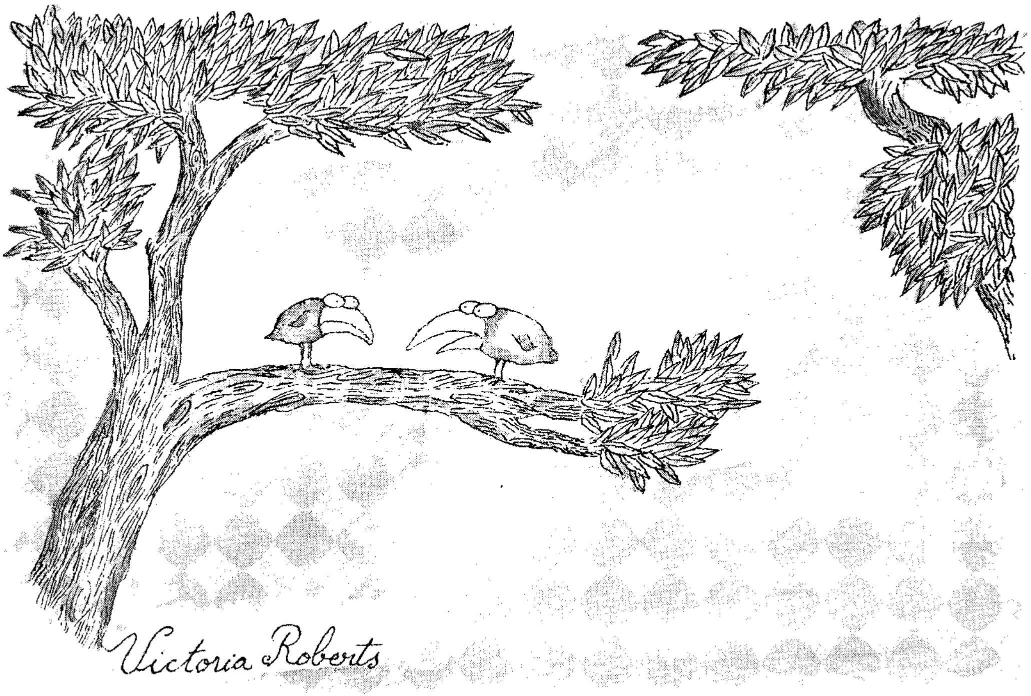
Streetwalking prostitutes, too, have a hierarchy. In the Care-Van, one becomes familiar with streetwalker "strolls," or "tracks," as they are called. The common denominator is the slow crawl of cars, girls darting into the street, price negotiations at the drivers' windows. At the top are the women of Fifty-eighth Street and around the corner on Sixth Avenue. They wear ankle-length coyote or raccoon coats over Victoria's Secret-type chemises of shimmering satin, black stockings, and five-inch red heels or boots. Most are young, pimp-controlled, have their own doctors, and disdain Joyce Wallace's offer of condoms. "Not my brand," one says. These "girls" can be seen negotiating dates on the sidewalk and taking men into hotels such as the Park Savoy, on West Fifty-eighth Street, where they can service a john who wants vaginal, anal, fantasy, or S & M sex for between three hundred and five hundred dollars. As on the rest of the strolls, a ten-minute blow job is the mainstay of their business. Here the price is thirty to fifty dollars.

Eleventh Avenue was the mecca for the flashiest of the streetwalkers until two years ago, when neighborhood groups organized to expel them. Now it still has a concentration of flamboyant girls in G-strings with sparkling pasties on their nipples, or in lace panties and bras, who stand on the corners and in the side streets from Twenty-third to Thirty-second. They also work on Ninth and Tenth Avenues. Here teenage boys drive past—sometimes, according to the girls, masturbating and "getting it for free." Teen-agers also have been known to pose as johns in order to rob streetwalkers of their cash. The police, whom the streetwalkers call "blue-and-whites," seem to arrest the younger women most often, in the hope of discouraging them from staying on the track.

When a date requires more than fellatio, streetwalkers often take him to a hotel such as the Terminal Hotel, at Twenty-third Street and Eleventh Avenue—a place so steadily frequented that it has become one of Wallace's regular Care-Van stops. Streetwalkers also congregate around the entrance to the Lincoln Tunnel on Thirty-fourth Street. Here, too, parked Nissan, Mitsubishi, and Cadillac cars containing prostitutes at work have become a familiar sight.

There is a hiatus on Eleventh Avenue from Thirty-fourth to Thirty-ninth Streets, where the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center has been closely policed since it opened, in the spring of 1986, so that tourists will not see streetwalkers working the area. Business picks up again between Thirty-ninth and Forty-fourth Streets, but then the streets from Forty-fourth to Forty-eighth and the avenues from Ninth to Eleventh are almost devoid of streetwalkers. This is due largely to the efforts of Residents Against Street Prostitution (RASP) and the West 47th/48th Streets Block Association, which work with community police in the Clinton area to keep streetwalkers out of their back yard. (These groups also discourage stops by the Care-Van in residential areas, because they believe that it attracts prostitutes and the pimps and drug dealers who often follow.)

The meat-market district, on Ninth and Tenth Avenues



"The Icarus story is just that—a story."

from Gansevoort to Sixteenth Streets, is populated by "true transvestites," or men, dressed as women, who have not attempted to change their gender with hormones or surgery; pre-op transsexuals, or men who have taken hormones to grow breasts but have not undergone castration; and post-op transsexuals, or men who have breasts as a result of hormones and have been castrated. These streetwalkers, with their large, unfeminine feet, thickly painted red lips, and extravagant wigs, wear brocaded jackets and fish-net stockings and totter on the inevitable five-inch heels. They perform primarily oral or masturbatory sex, and they receive twenty dollars for the requisite ten minutes.

On Eleventh, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Streets between Second and Third Avenues is an area associated with intravenous-drug use. Streetwalkers wear black stretch pants and bright-colored high heels. Along the West Side Highway are more of these women, who for hotel service take johns to the Liberty Inn at Fourteenth Street and Tenth Avenue. When one telephones the hotel, a tape recording announces special three-hour rates on Friday and Saturday nights, convenient parking, and the acceptance of MasterCard, Visa, and American Express.

On the Lower East Side, the line between prostitution and desperation becomes blurred. One cannot fail to notice how drugs and streetwalking have become inextricably combined. In Sara Delano Roosevelt Park, at Houston, Delancey, and Stanton Streets, girls dressed in jeans, worn T-shirts, and sneakers stand waiting for cars to stop. The price for fellatio is negotiable, but it's usually the price of a vial of crack—five dollars.

At the bottom of the heap are the homeless, often substance abusers, who find streetwalking a way to survive. This is the desperate population that Joyce Wallace most wants to help. Under the Park Avenue elevated tracks, from 115th to 125th Streets, mostly black and Hispanic women congregate, waiting for a john to provide money or a fix. In the Bronx, Jerome Avenue near Fordham University has more of these women, and so, in Brooklyn, do Coney Island from West Fifteenth Street to West Twenty-second Street, Sheepshead Bay, Williamsburg, Bushwick, and Flatlands. At the Hunts Point market, in the Bronx, truckers park and wait patiently for their blow jobs, priced at five dollars.

"Actually, I'd written off the nineties before my conviction."

• •

Wallace's fight to keep the streetwalking prostitutes healthy is no small undertaking. AIDS is now the leading cause of death in New York City among women between twenty and thirty-nine. A landmark study on sexual practices, the most comprehensive in more than forty years, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health, recently found that the heterosexuals who are at highest risk of acquiring H.I.V. are still ignoring the need to change their behavior: almost forty per cent of the heterosexuals who frequent prostitutes never use condoms, and seventy per cent of the heterosexuals with a partner who they know is at risk of having H.I.V. also never use condoms.

"Condoms, condoms, condoms, we've got to get them to use them," Wallace says. "And not just streetwalkers. I've seen four hundred cases of AIDS in my private practice, and a hundred and sixty H.I.V.-positive women. They come from all classes. AIDS is everywhere. Several new studies predict that by the year 2000 as many as fifty per cent of the people in this country who are H.I.V.-positive will be women."

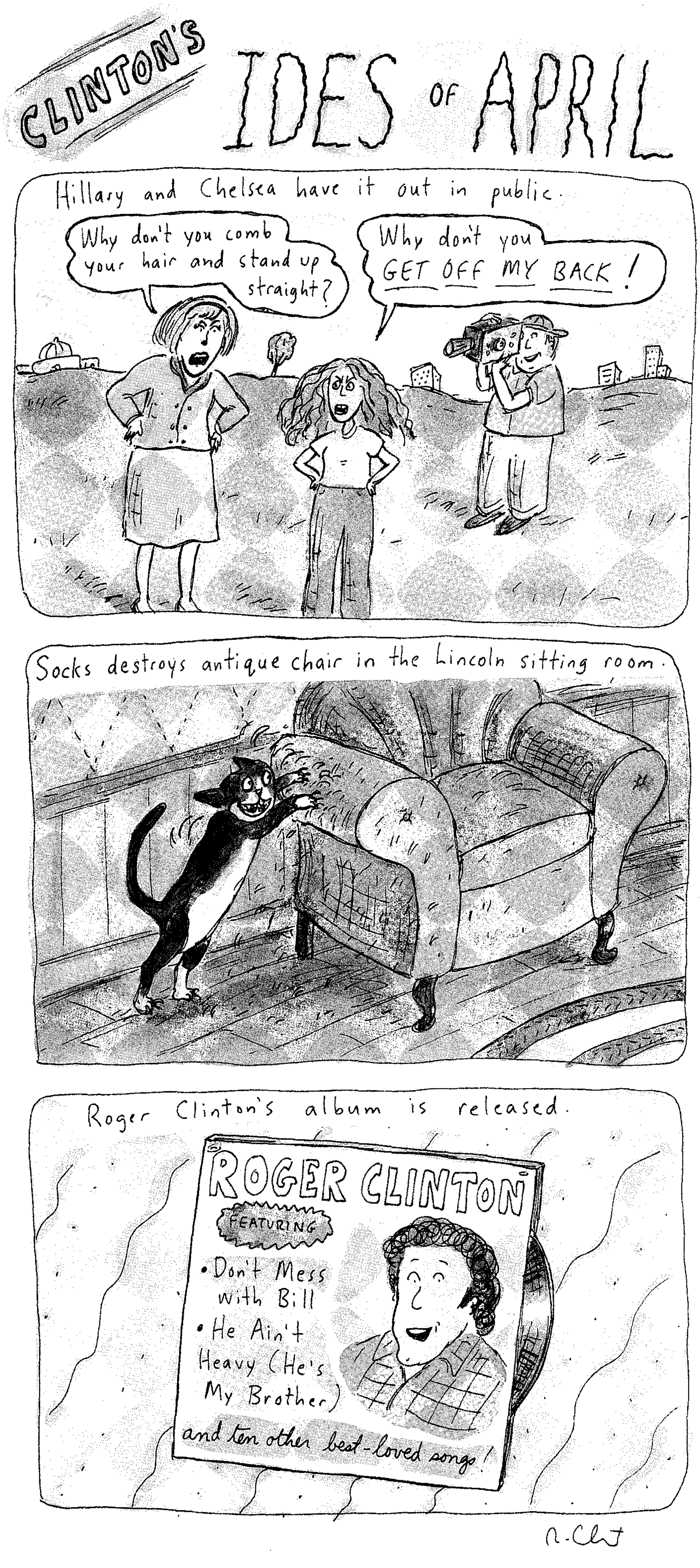
Although half of the streetwalkers consistently use condoms with clients, most never use them with boyfriends and pimps. Wallace believes in straight talk. "People think that prostitutes know how to protect themselves, but it's simply not true," she says. "They think they can't get infected from their boyfriends, and they'll take a few extra bucks if a john doesn't want to wear a condom."

"I won't use those things with my man. If I did, how could I tell him from a john?" one streetwalker asks.

"He'd kill me," another says.

"The last time I asked him to do that, I got a black eye," says a third.

It's men who must agree to wear condoms, and the majority don't. Kathleen Stoll, the director of the National Resource Center on Women and AIDS, notes that "when we talk about teaching women to negotiate condom use, we're really going to the heart of some of the most basic levels of sexism in our society." Recognizing this fact, Wallace sponsored a video by Vivian Kleiman to educate prostitutes not only on safe-sex practices but on how to


CLINTON'S IDES OF APRIL
Hillary and Chelsea have it out in public.
Why don't you comb your hair and stand up straight?
Why don't you GET OFF MY BACK!
Socks destroys antique chair in the Lincoln sitting room.
Roger Clinton's album is released.
ROGER CLINTON
FEATURING
• Don't Mess with Bill
• He Ain't Heavy (He's My Brother)
and ten other best-loved songs!

eroticize safe sex. One prostitute shows another how to hold a condom in her mouth and slide it down the penis with her tongue. There is a demonstration of a wet washcloth, with a condom concealed inside, washing a penis. The prostitute instructor says that in this manner one can put a condom in place without the john's knowing it. She also demonstrates how to lubricate one's hand with K-Y jelly or a similar product, and tuck it between the legs, manipulating the hand muscles so the john feels he has entered her body. "Ninety-five per cent of the guys don't know that this is not a vagina," she says. "Make noise, it's always better." The other prostitute replies that she would never do this, because if the john found out she'd tricked him she might be hurt. The choice between AIDS infection and violence is harsh.

"WHAT my mother was, and wanted to be, was a nice Jewish matron living a nice life," explains Julie Wallace, Wallace's twenty-five-year-old daughter, from her first marriage. "She wanted a stimulating life—not necessarily intellectual, but active and fun. She loved nice things, the theatre, the activities of the temple, clothes, cooking, family, the sweet old ladies in her practice, the stimulation of her artistic patients. That's the way she was and would have remained, had it not been for AIDS."

The Joyce Wallace one encounters today moves through life at gale force. Even her smallest action—ordering a pastrami sandwich at Katz's Delicatessen ("Slice it thinner. I said cut off *all* the fat") or sending a fax ("It was blank again? You're telling me the writing goes down, not up?")—is imbued with a sense of high drama. In the space of a few minutes, she will exhibit contradictory behavior: She is known to scream at her employees and undermine their authority, then praise them lavishly. She will be by turns confrontational then charming, short-tempered then loving, proper then bawdy, insensitive then solicitous, manic then depressed. At a low point in her life, she was diagnosed as suffering from "depressive neurosis."

To keep AIDS and despair and death at bay, Wallace has had periods when she worked non-stop and slept only four hours a night. She plays tennis twice a week, obsessively watches mysteries on TV, has worked with a trainer and taken tap-dancing and voice lessons to alleviate the pain of watching the Greenwich Village world she loved become "peopled with ghosts." For Wallace, there is never enough time to repair the damage. All the hours and the days and the years are not enough. The energy she expends on her efforts to meet the vast needs of streetwalkers often leaves her confused and forgetful. A neighbor keeps an extra set of keys to Wallace's house, because she so frequently forgets her own. She once telephoned a friend at 2 A.M. to report a missing parakeet. "Come right over and help me look," she commanded. She doesn't hesitate to disclose that her most recent study of prostitutes' sexual and drug behavior was rejected for publication in a medical journal. "They said my statistics were faulty and sloppy, so I'm doing it over. I guess they were right. I rushed it." Her son, Aryeh, called Ari, who is thirteen, says, "A kid has to realize that she's got a lot on her mind. She knows exactly what she wants to do, but doesn't know exactly how she wants to do it."

Wallace's background suggests the origin of that odd personal dichotomy—part dedication, part disorganization. As a child, Joyce lived in the South Ozone Park area of Queens. Her father, Samuel Malakoff, taught high school in the rough-and-tumble section of East New York. According to his daughter, he was a frightened man of broken dreams, a Depression child who, although he held an engineering degree and was a "near-genius" in automobile mechanics (he could determine what was wrong by listening to a car engine with a stethoscope), had opted for the security of a high-school teacher's job. Her mother, Henrietta, who dropped out of Brooklyn College to marry, was a housewife, absorbed in taking care of Joyce, her younger brothers Edward and Lee, who had a serious speech impediment, and Sam himself, who suffered from severe asthma. "Every year, my father spent time in the hospital, and once he was confined for forty days," Wallace recalls. She believes that her own fearless personality is a throwback to her father's mother, Rose Malakoff, who, rebelling when her father would not let her continue her education, though she was only thirteen, left her home, in the Jewish Pale of czarist Russia, came to the United States, found a relative in Pittsburgh, learned a new language, and completed grades one through eight in a single year.

In 1953, when Joyce was twelve, Lee, who was eight, became seriously ill. She remembers endless blood-count tests being done at home. Lee died the following summer, of childhood lymphocytic leukemia. "Today, they save children like that," Wallace says. "If I'd been a doctor then, I'll bet I could have saved him."

With Lee's death, Henrietta Malakoff spiralled into what Wallace calls "an almost manic state"—one that some say her daughter also evinces. Henrietta slept only two hours a night, first studying to be a medical-laboratory technician, then a school secretary. "She learned Pitman shorthand in two weeks," her daughter says. Finally, after an eighteen-year absence, she returned to Brooklyn College, completed her education, and began working for the Board of Education, specializing in children with speech and brain defects. "She was always trying to make up for Lee's death," Wallace says.

Joyce spent much of her time trying to excel at activities her mother favored, including membership in the Girl Scout troop where Henrietta was active, but little attention was paid to her formal education, at public schools in Queens. "It never occurred to me that that was important for a woman," her mother says. When a teacher remarked that Joyce was not smart enough to pass the examination for Manhattan's Hunter High School, she took the test, was accepted, and attended the school for two years, before deciding that it was too much of a commute. At nineteen, she became engaged to a law student, a match that she felt would please her parents, but one day she asked herself, "What am I doing? I could *be* a lawyer or a doctor instead of marrying one," and the engagement was broken off.

Although her parents had offered to pay for her brother Edward's college education, they refused to pay for hers, so she went to work for the Girl Scouts for a year and a half while attending Queens College. After that, feeling fragmented, depressed, unable to concentrate, and in acute distress over the direction her life was taking, she sought the help of the psychiatrist Joseph Meiers. He encouraged her to become a doctor. When, in the summer of 1964, she was accepted at the Medical College of Pennsylvania, Henrietta, who could not even imagine her daughter becoming a doctor, said, "Joyce, for once in your life, listen to your mother. Be a teacher." When no financial help was forthcoming, Grandma Rose Malakoff, who had not been permitted an education beyond the eighth grade, began giving Joyce ten thousand dollars a year.

Six weeks before receiving her medical-school acceptance, Joyce had married Lance Wallace, a twenty-six-year-old graduate of the University of Washington, who worked as a researcher for the Crowell-Collier Educational Corporation. The following year, she transferred to Brooklyn's Downstate Medical Center, and in 1968, two months before her graduation, gave birth to Julie. She breast-fed the infant for fourteen months while simultaneously pursuing a rigorous "part-time" internship at St. Vincent's Hospital and Medical Center, in Manhattan, working, she said, "eight and a half hours a day, five and a half days a week, fifty weeks a year, for two years." In July of 1972, Wallace began a residency at the Nassau County Medical Center. When she worked in the Emergency Room, she often stayed through the night. In 1973, with the completion of her residency, Joyce Wallace's annual salary of twelve thousand dollars ceased. Under the pressures of work and lack of money, her marriage began to turn sour.

In September, the Wallaces separated, amid bitter arguments over money and responsibility. During the next frantic year, Joyce Wallace worked eighty hours a week. She tried to study for her Boards but had little time and less concentration. She failed the examination. The following year, still unable to concentrate for an adequate length of time, she went so far as to visit a hypnotist. After that visit, she settled down, and in June of 1976 she took the exam again and passed.

A HOLE in a heavy wire fence that surrounds a lot around the corner from the Bush Terminal, in an industrial area near the waterfront in the Sunset Park section of Brooklyn, is jagged and barely wide enough for a person to climb through. Ricardo Ayala, the Care-Van driver, leans against the wire, enlarging the gap so Wallace can enter. Underfoot, trampled into the mud, is some Care-Van literature that was left there two weeks ago. The mud is a carpet in which are embedded shreds of clothing, sneakers, bottle tops, plastic cups, soda cans, cigarette butts, shards of corroded iron pipe, bits of food. To the left, supported by a fence of rusty corrugated metal, is a mountain of discarded truck and car tires. In the middle of the lot are two decaying trucks and two gutted cars, one with a mattress oozing brown cotton wedged into the back seat. Shattered glass from the windshield covers the hood. At the rear of the lot, under four ragged ailanthus trees, are three Dumpsters, black with orange trim. A chalky-complexioned girl in stained sweatpants and a T-shirt printed with the word "Hope" is struggling to close a makeshift door cut into the overturned middle Dumpster, which is inscribed "N.Y.C. Department of Sanitation 25, Coney Island Rubbish Removal, 282-6633." Inside are a single mattress, a folding chair with a gold velvet seat, and a rusted tin garbage pail filled with charcoal. A scrawny black cat with white feet, as emaciated as the girl herself, crouches in one corner. Wallace marches up and helps the girl push the heavy door. It doesn't budge.

"So how's it going?"

"You got anything free on the van?"

"You want a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich?" Wallace asks. "You want a test?"

The girl, who gives her name as Millie, follows Wallace to the Care-Van. The sandwich goes down fast. She refuses the H.I.V. test, saying, "I don't want to know."

"What if I told you that even if you were positive there's a lot you could do to keep healthy for a long, long time," Wallace says.

"I can't keep healthy now, but so what? Can you do it fast?"

As Wallace runs through the personal-information questionnaire, Millie answers willingly. She says she's eighteen.

Does she use condoms?

"Yes, when they're given to me. I like those mint-flavored ones for blow jobs." But she adds that most of the guys won't wear condoms, and she never uses them with men she knows. She says she'll do a blow job for two dollars or for "good" drugs. She drinks alcohol, snorts heroin. Obligingly, she rolls up her sweatpants to show Wallace the black bruises and craters on her legs from speedballing (injecting cocaine and heroin under the skin). "Do you think you can help me get rid of these?" she asks.

"Do you want to stop using?"

"I do. I want to stop. One day, I went all the way to Prospect Place to Phoenix House, 'cause I heard they could get me clean, clean in every way. I stood outside and watched people going in. It wasn't my type of place, if you know what I mean. They looked real high-up for me. I walked away." (Both Dr. Wallace and Dr. Mitchell Rosenthal, the president of the Phoenix House Foundation, say that this is a typical denial response.)

Wallace hands her a card. "Here's our new 800 number. It's free. You can call us any time you're ready, and we'll pick you up and get you in somewhere. When you're *really* ready, call."

A woman in red tights approaches the van. She has matted black hair extending almost to her waist. She asks for an H.I.V. test, but as she is about to enter the van a slim man steps forward and jerks her back by the shoulder, speaking angrily to her in Spanish. Ricardo Ayala steps forward and talks Spanish to the man. He calms down, turns to Wallace, and says, "You give me the free condoms, I'll give you the girl."

THE ALLIGATOR WRESTLER

The alligator waits in her aluminum case,
shaped to hold the odd length of her
like a troubled trombone. When her keeper
cracks open the lid, anger leaches out
in hopeless coils, like the roots
of mangroves buckled and snarled.

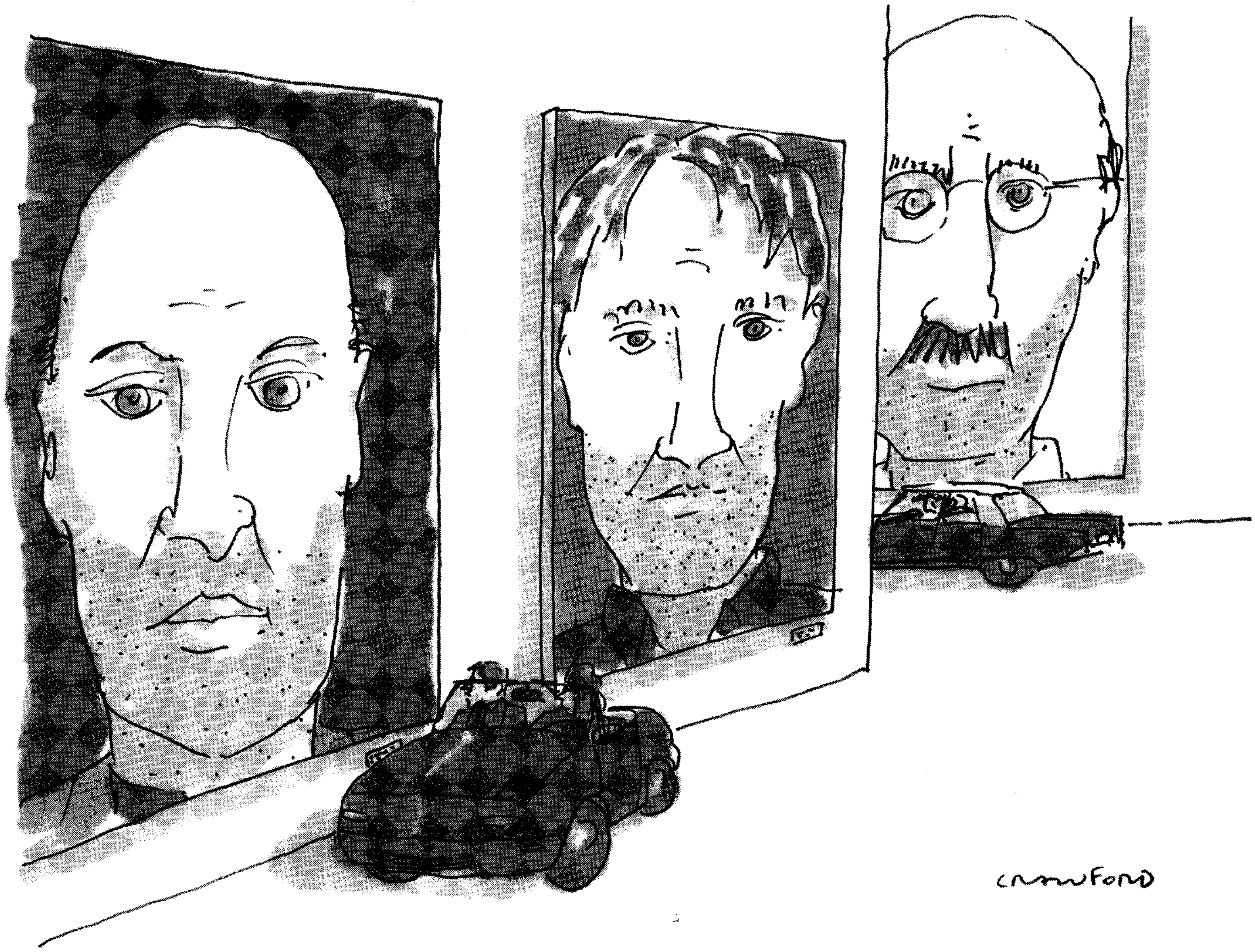
Her mouth's tied. Two men heave her
pale body, bear it to the clearing,
and cut her free. Stunned by the dry grass
and the trampled light, she hisses—
is she dying of a punctured heart?
Her jaws unfold, pink and gleaming

and strange as a porcelain ironing board.
She fills herself with sunlight
till the keeper makes a move
on her. Then she slams herself shut.
Grabbing her snout, he sinks his fingers
under her creamy jaw and straddles her.

Her throat is mild and naked as a glove.
Flipped on her back, she's out cold.
Now we admire her head, slim
as a beak, her moon-white belly tiled
like the floor of the shower
in some dingy Y. "In this position,"

says her keeper, "the blood is leaving
her brain. In this position, she could die."
He nuzzles her cobbled ear, calling
in the sweet tongue by which alligators
choose each other. Her tail twitches.
She's back. The show is over.

—Nancy Willard



"He's big, but he's no Chuck Close."

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The questions begin. "Any sexually transmitted diseases?" Wallace asks the woman.

"No."

"How about hepatitis?"

"Oh, yeah, I had that."

"And herpes?"

"Yeah, yeah."

"Syphilis?"

"No. Maybe. I did get those three shots."

"How old were you when you first had sex?"

"I don't remember."

Wallace is a skillful interviewer. She now asks a question not on the questionnaire: "Was it your choice or his?"

The woman begins to cry. "Listen, Doc, guys have been doin' this to me since I was a kid, but now I've done something really stupid. I've been sharing works with a guy and he just died of AIDS. That's why I need the test. Can you help me?"

"Let's start with the test, and we'll take it from there. I want to know where you'll be, or you can call that 800 number to the office."

In the next hour, several men and women approach the van seeking free condoms. As Wallace hands a package to a burly, ruddy-faced, lumber-jacketed man, she remarks, "You've got two kinds in there."

"What for?"

"The lubricated are for fucking. The other kind are oral."

The man says, "Boy, oh boy, lady, are you straight up."

"I THOUGHT even if I didn't see interesting diseases, I'd meet interesting patients," Dr. Wallace says of her medical practice, which she purchased in 1976 from a retiring physician, on West Twelfth Street in Greenwich Village. In 1978, she met Arthur Kahn, a stockbroker now at Prudential Securities, and they married the following year. A son, Ari, was born in March of 1980, and Wallace became caught up in motherhood and her new practice. The charts left by her predecessor were for "all sorts of patients—families, old widows, and lots of gay men and lesbians," she says. "The sexual scene was wide open in those days. My practice was at least one-third gay men, and we'd order penicillin by the boxcar. I could diagnose a case of gonorrhea in thirty seconds flat."

By 1980, Wallace had begun to notice cases of unusual nonspecific lymphadenopathy (enlargement of the lymph nodes in response to disease) in her homosexual male patients. Rumors had begun to circulate about a new disease associated with decreased cellular immunity and affecting homosexual men. In March of 1981, Wallace examined a fifty-three-year-old homosexual male patient who suffered from a variety of ailments. She noticed that his second and fourth toes had a bluish discoloration. "What did you do?" she inquired.

"I don't remember," he said. "I must have dropped something on them."

"But these two are blue, and the one in the middle is normal. The only thing you could have dropped is a two-pronged fork."

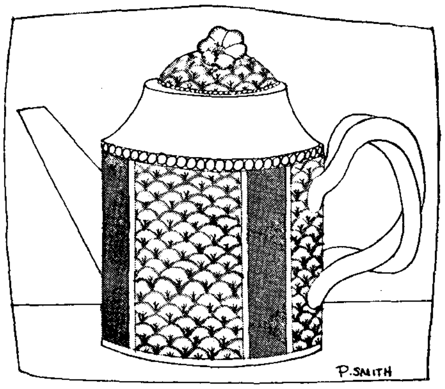
Wallace, who had accepted a position as an attending physician at St. Vincent's and had acquired admitting privileges, immediately put the patient in the hospital. There the chief of pathology, Dr. John F. Gillooley, did a biopsy and diagnosed Kaposi's sarcoma, a disease so rare that it occurred in approximately one out of five million people. That afternoon, Wallace called the National Cancer Institute for more information. They referred her to Dr. Charles Vogel, an expert on Kaposi's sarcoma, who had recently returned from Africa. She called Vogel and began questioning him. In passing, he mentioned that there were five cases of Kaposi's sarcoma in New York University Hospital. Before the week was out, Wallace had learned that there were twenty-seven cases of the disease in New York City. She was named among the researchers who published their findings in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* of July 3, 1981—the earliest mention of this disease in connection with immunodeficient homosexual men.

In early 1982, a New Jersey doctor who knew of Wallace's skill in treating sexually transmitted diseases and of her interest in women with multiple partners sent her "an interesting patient," a clean-cut, bright engineering student from the Midwest called Barbara, who had worked in a New Jersey brothel for three months the previous summer to earn her graduate-school tuition, turning up to twenty-five tricks a night—"twenty-five deposits of semen," as Wallace puts it. Worried about her co-workers' health, Barbara sent six of her fellow-prostitutes to Wallace.

In what was to become typical of her modus operandi, Wallace—having heard that the Department of Health, in order to study a new strain of gonorrhea, had been allowed entry into six Manhattan brothels—persuaded the investigators to draw an extra vial of blood from twenty-five of these prostitutes, so she could study their T-cells, the lymphatic cells that initiate or halt an immune response. She also took blood samples from the seven private patients who worked in the New Jersey brothel. Unable to raise funds from traditional sources, Wallace applied to the Gay Men's Health Crisis, and was awarded one of its first grants—a thousand dollars to study the immune status of these women.

In this very limited sample, an immunodepression rate of nineteen per cent was found. One woman in Wallace's study tested positive for H.I.V. It was Barbara, whose sexual contacts after three summers' work in the brothel numbered fifteen hundred. Barbara died at twenty-three, two weeks after she graduated from engineering school.

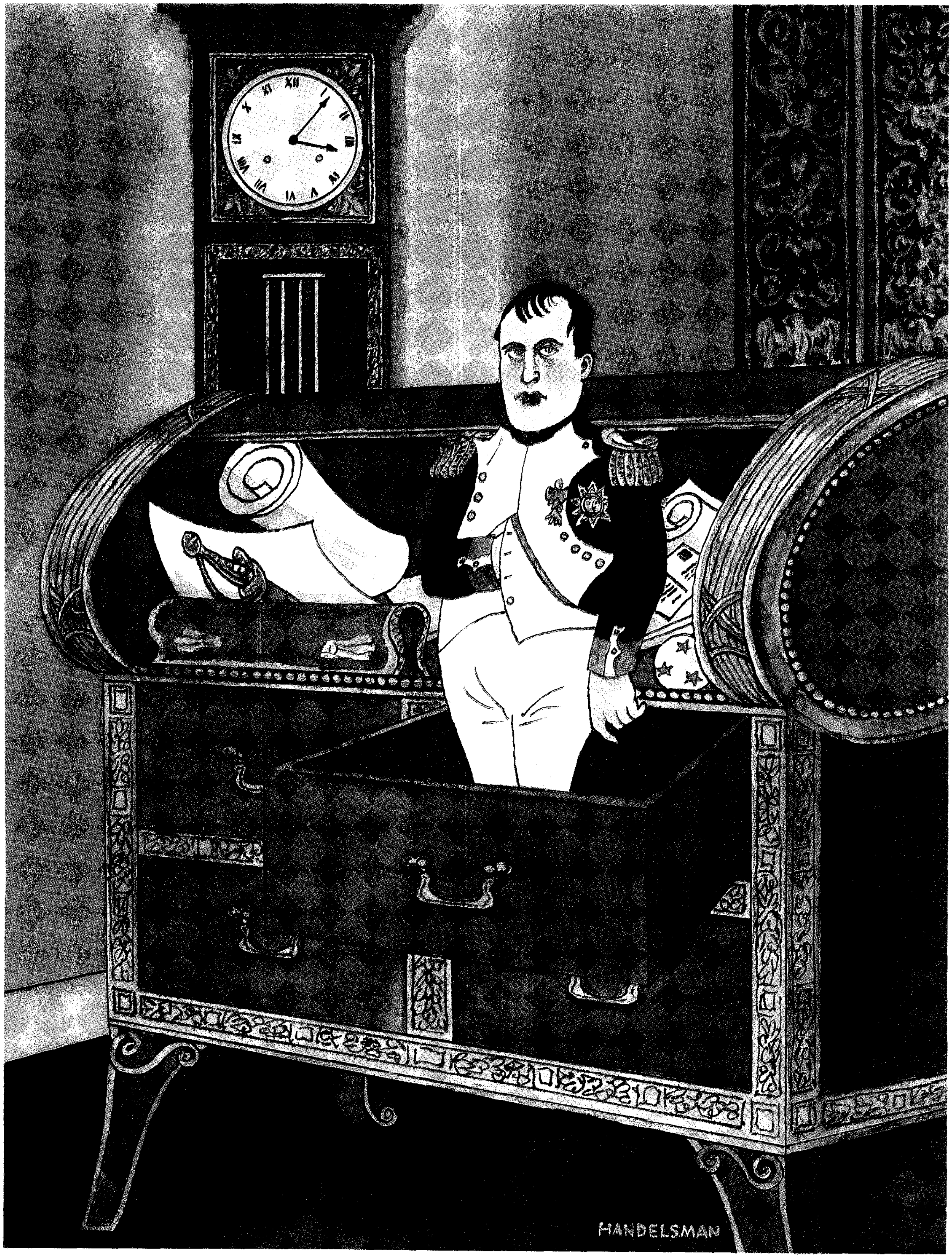
In August of 1982, the *Journal of the American Medical Women's Association* interviewed Wallace. While other doctors were saying that this new disease would run its course, Wallace told the interviewer, "It's imperative that research be done on this problem now." She added, "And it is possible we're just getting the tip of the iceberg. So far we have found no way to reverse the immune problem." She began openly criticizing St. Vincent's hospital workers and administrators for the manner in which they were handling this threatening new disease—"hiding it, so that patients would not stampede from the hospital." Over the next few years, her relationship with the hospital's hierarchy was frequently stormy and strident. She suggested that St. Vincent's change the isolation status of AIDS patients, so that they could be given hot meals. At the time, they were served cold food on paper trays, with plastic knives and forks. The food was left outside the door, and desperately sick patients often had to crawl into the hallway to retrieve it. Doctors referred to this as "the grazing syndrome."



Wallace decided to apply for another grant, and received twenty-five thousand dollars from the Cancer Research Institute to pursue a study she devised on the immunologic parameters in women who practice anal sex. One of Wallace's bisexual patients agreed to take part in the study and arranged for nine of her friends to volunteer as well. These women belonged to a sadomasochistic group that attended twice-weekly S & M nights at the Saint, a sex club on lower Second Avenue, where they had anal intercourse with multiple partners. Some of these women admitted to upward of a thousand such encounters. But because there was no control group the study turned out to be unworkable. Unable to pursue it further, and with five thousand dollars left from her grant, she persuaded the institute to allow her to test her theory that women with multiple partners were at higher risk of contracting AIDS.

Wallace's marriage to Arthur Kahn had lasted less than four years; the two separated in 1983. (Today, Kahn says, "She's got a lot of energy—she's in constant motion. Her personality expresses itself in her immersion in her work.") During a routine office visit, one of her patients, Nicholas Christonikos, who worked at the United Nations library, asked, "How are you doin', Doc?" She replied, "Not bad, considering I'm going through a messy divorce." Christonikos recalls, "She'd been my doctor for ten years, but I could see that she was sending me a different signal. I called her that afternoon. Joyce is a force. She's extremely outgoing and dedicated, but sometimes she tends to outsmart herself in her zeal and rush to get things done. Life with Joyce was never dull; she worked continuously—a meal meant snatching a bite and out we'd go." With her new boyfriend at her side, Joyce Wallace hit the streets.

In 1984, the virus that causes AIDS was discovered. Subsequently, when an H.I.V.-antibody test became available, Wallace would walk up to a prostitute and offer her twenty dollars for allowing her to take a test blood sample and ask a few simple questions. "It was what they'd get for a blow job, and it took about the same amount of time." At first streetwalkers were wary, and in the first year only twenty-one agreed to be tested. But Christonikos learned to talk to the


HANDELSMAN

Napoléon dans Son Bureau Après Jacques-Louis David

pimps, and the women began to trust Wallace. In 1987, she studied sixty-eight streetwalking prostitutes, most of whom were on the Eleventh Avenue stroll.

The most ambitious study that Wallace undertook was one in which she received a grant of two hundred and thirty-eight thousand dollars, from the AIDS Institute of the New York State Department of Health, to become the principal investigator in a study of the rate of H.I.V. infection in former I.V.-drug-using streetwalkers and other women. In a group of a hundred and ten former female drug-users who showed no symptoms of disease, forty-six per cent tested H.I.V.-positive. These women reported an astounding lifetime mean of 3,062 sexual partners per individual. The women who were H.I.V.-negative reported only a third as many partners. Intravenous-drug use and promiscuous sex were proving to be a deadly combination, but the worst was still ahead. By 1987, New York City was caught in a crack epidemic.

Gena Corea, the associate director of the Institute on Women and Technology, has observed in her recently published book, "The Invisible Epidemic: The Story of Women and AIDS," that early sexual abuse "is a setup for drug addiction." Joyce Wallace confirms this statement. "My studies show that over eighty per cent of crack-addicted streetwalkers have been sexually abused before the age of twelve," she says. Sex and crack exist in a symbiotic relationship. Crack is found to stimulate hypersexuality in men. Crack-addicted women are looking not for sexual excitement but for a way to feel briefly empowered or protected, or to wall out pain. In a classic Catch-22, the crack high, which lasts about twenty minutes, makes each sex act that a streetwalker performs bearable, and she performs such acts to get more crack. In a horrifying account of male domination Dr. Mary E. Guinan, of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, writes, "Women crack addicts are sometimes kept at crack houses and given the drug in exchange for sex with the dealers or clients. The women become virtual slaves to both the drug and the dealers." In these houses, a crack-addicted woman is often referred to as a "toss-up"—a woman to be used for sex acts, then "tossed" away. The women are gang-raped, forced to perform fellatio on every man in the room, and even to perform sex acts with dogs. In this atmosphere, Wallace asserts, two out of every five of these traumatized women become infected with H.I.V.

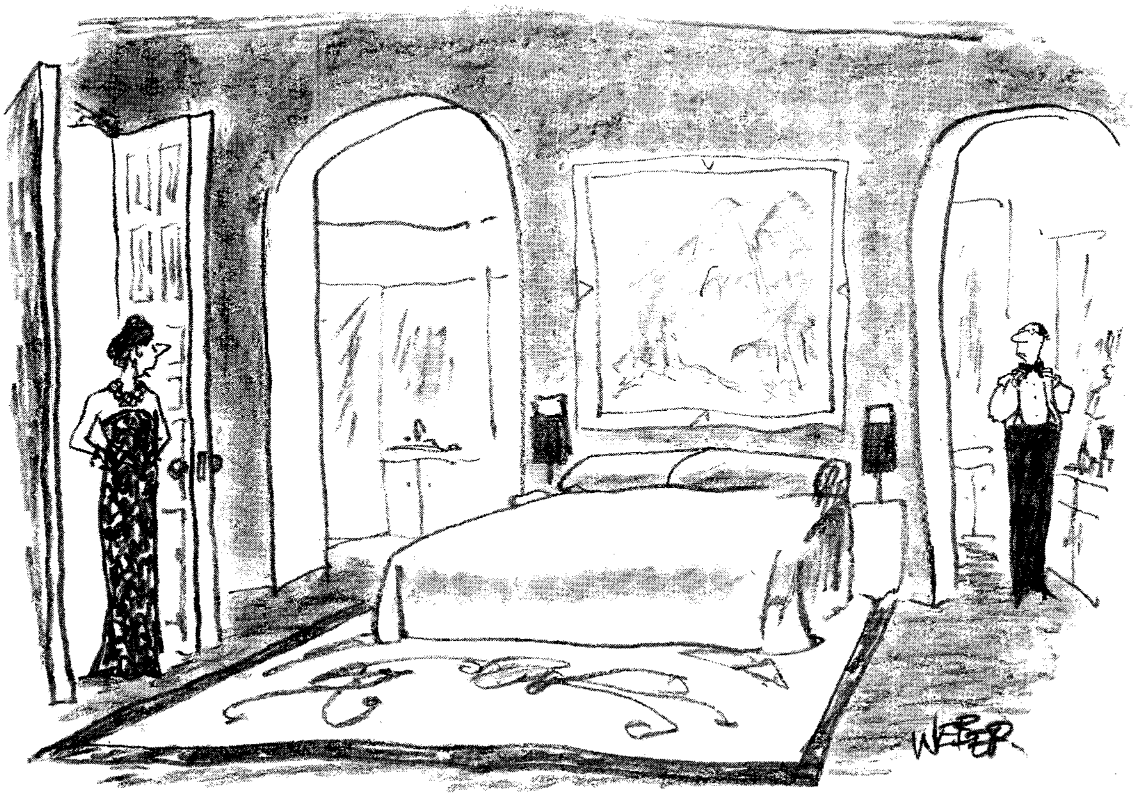
AROUND the Care-Van, parked at the corner of Jerome Avenue and 182nd Street, the crack dance commences: a café-au-lait girl in a brocaded jacket moves spasmodically, her arms flying out at random angles, her eyes darting from the van to the street, where cars move slowly past. She wants an H.I.V. test, but she doesn't want to miss turning a trick. Standing on the corner, and leaning in to the mirror next to the driver's seat, another girl, her face a Benin mask, her breasts bare under an open red silk jacket, applies lipstick. Around and around the lipstick goes, until her mouth is a red gash. Then she begins picking at her face, her nails raking her cheeks. Outside the window, a rail-thin, sallow woman bobs rhythmically up and down, as if on a spring. "Hey, you gotta box of Kleenex?" she asks. "I wanna get this fuckin' cum offa my face."

Fran Davis, a case manager and a driver of the Care-Van, whom Wallace met through her Thursday tennis game, points to a group of women waiting to be tested. "See how they twitch?" she says. "What you see is a lack of muscle control, an automatic response. That's what crack does to them."

A transvestite comes to the window of the van, asks for a double helping of condoms, says, "Thank you, sweetie," and smiles, revealing great gaps where teeth are missing. A few minutes later, a girl rolls up her sleeve and extends her arm in preparation for the blood test; on the palm of her hand are thick swirls of scar tissue. She says that when she was a kid she did something "bad," so her mother's boyfriend held her hand on the stove. Around one o'clock, the last girl of the evening approaches the Care-Van. Her name is Carmen and she says she wants to get out of the van "real fast, 'cause I have to pee." She says she's on crack and nasal heroin, but wants to get off. "I need help, I'm

"Well, Stoddard, I think I've bounced enough ideas off you for one day."

emotionally messed up and I want to get off these streets." Allannah Thomas, who used to be Wallace's private-practice phlebotomist and is now the Care-Van manager, gives Carmen a card with the FROST'D toll-free number and says, "Make sure you phone me in the morning. If I'm not there, I'm in the bathroom—tell them to go in and get me."



"The caterers haven't shown up, the musicians are late, and the elevator is broken. We might as well be living in a Third World country."

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In 1985, after the *Times* wrote that Wallace had received a two-hundred-and-twenty-thousand-dollar grant, her landlord tripled her rent. Wallace went looking for a house where she could pull together the strands of her life, and bought a place on West Twelfth Street. Next to the laundry room in the basement, she set up an office for the writing of grant proposals. A medical office and an examining room were on the first floor. (Her private patients became accustomed to her habit of suddenly interrupting an examination to tend to her laundry or dictate sections of a grant proposal.) On the top two floors Wallace lives with Ari. (Julie lived there briefly before getting her own apartment.) By August of 1987, Wallace had broken up with Christonikos and was using a car service, testing prostitutes in the back seat while Ari often sat in the front next to the driver, doing his homework. After the *News* ran a sympathetic article about her, the company that makes LifeStyles condoms volunteered to buy her a van for fifteen thousand dollars and offered to donate condoms for her to distribute. After a full day's work, Joyce Wallace would round up her exhausted medical-office staff and take the Care-Van out on the Eleventh Avenue track, but soon the pace became too hectic even for her. Finally, she stored the unused condoms, put the van in a garage, and went back to her basement office to find funding for a proper program.

Under the strain of her many projects, Wallace's private practice had grown increasingly chaotic. Patients recall waiting what seemed endlessly in an office that was part Groucho Marx, part Grand Guignol. When one asked for a magazine, a receptionist suggested that perhaps she'd prefer "War and Peace." "On a typical day, dying men with AIDS would be sitting there, and an old lady having her ears cleaned would be screaming in the examining room," an employee recalls. "Prostitutes would drop in for their H.I.V.-test results. One locked herself in the bathroom, got high, and wouldn't come out." A new receptionist would arrive on Monday, go out to lunch, and never reappear. Along about Thursday, Wallace would bellow, "What ever happened to that girl?" Within the next year and a half, employees came and went. Word of mouth brought nurses from St. Vincent's, friends, babysitters, acquaintances. "All the world's a shtetl," Wallace says of her recruitment methods. In the basement, a team worked on grant proposals. When a woman who had been a copy editor at Harper & Row drafted a grant proposal to the Centers for Disease Control, Wallace asked the advice of friends, patients, and her cleaning woman, Josephine. The proposal was due in Albany at 3 P.M. on a Friday. At 2:30 A.M., a cousin of Wallace's who was a biochemist, and whom Wallace terms "the country's leading expert on dental plaque," read the proposal and suggested that it should be completely rewritten. The revision was completed by 8 A.M., and Wallace hired a retired social worker to take it by train to Albany, but not before arguing that a hundred dollars was too much money to pay for a job that was worth only eighty. The proposal was received, and Wallace was granted two hundred and seventy thousand dollars for an eighteen-month study of prostitutes and the men who use their services. The study, which was named the Counseling, Testing, Referral and Partner Notification Project, mandated a massive outreach, budgeted at five thousand dollars a month. Wallace was to test a thousand streetwalkers a year.

Wallace reclaimed the Care-Van, and on the night of April 22, 1989, she set out on a journey up Park Avenue to

126th Street. After one or two prostitutes found the courage to visit the van, word spread at once that someone was giving out twenty-dollar bills. Suddenly, the street was swarming with people clamoring to get in, pounding on the windows and pulling at the door. When the phlebotomist locked the door, a prostitute inside the van became hysterical because she couldn't get out. Men and women climbed on the hood, pressing their faces against the windshield. Terrified, Wallace drove away, and people clinging to the van jumped or fell off. Finally, the Care-Van stopped to let the streetwalker out.

A later trip was also disastrous. Wallace drove the van toward the Hispanic section of Williamsburg, in Brooklyn, but soon found that all the signs were in Yiddish. She had taken a wrong turn, and she ended up in the midst of a Hasidic procession celebrating Succoth. The celebrants began shouting and making menacing gestures as Wallace made her escape.

After this rocky beginning, Wallace hired a Care-Van driver, a phlebotomist, and two H.I.V. counsellors, who had taken a four-day training course provided by the AIDS Institute. She replaced the twenty-dollar bills with McDonald's food coupons, and the van settled into a schedule, targeting thirteen prostitute strolls. Now that Wallace was in daily contact with great numbers of streetwalkers, she began to perceive their vast needs and the ineffectuality of our society in meeting them. She recalls the first time she encountered a streetwalker living in a Dumpster. The woman, who was covered with dirt and lice, told her, "If only I could get clean, then maybe I could get out of this life." Desperate to help, and believing that AIDS would eventually permeate every segment of our society, Wallace utilized her foundation, FROST'D, to meet streetwalkers' most urgent needs. Her goal was a drop-in center, where these women could acquire a mailing address and so begin the process of becoming eligible for social services, and where they could shower, get a meal, medical help, and counselling, and "start to remake their lives." A grant proposal went to the New York State Division of Substance Abuse Services, and in July of 1990 Wallace received a letter of intent saying that she was to receive two hundred and fifty thousand dollars annually for such a drop-in center.

A BOY'S LIFE

The thinnest pencil beam of light slices
the tent's floor, cuts across the rice
cakes and canteen, falters
a moment on the butane tin, then halts
altogether and goes out,
inventory over. The bout
of sickness—for home, for conversation even—
settles into the familiar labored breathing
of asthma and no one near.
The map's X keeps insisting: You Are Here.
If only someone else could see it—
not a grownup, necessarily, another kid
navigating the same terrain
with the same compass points—but now the rain's
begun and that practical twin
has unrolled his poncho like a tarp, turned in
(incongruous phrase) for the night
and won't, in any case, be needed when it's light.

—LYNNE MCMAHON

Wallace found a four-story building at 175 East Houston Street, a former brothel that had been padlocked by police for a year's term. Behind an iron grille a staircase rose steeply to a landing that faced a wall where crude murals depicted interracial sexual intercourse. There were iron cages around the stairwell—"so the johns wouldn't toss the girls down the stairs," she explains. The smell of urine still permeated the place. Stained mattresses and filthy hand towels remained in each of the cubiclelike rooms. But Wallace considered the building's rental a bargain—four thousand dollars a month for the first three years of a ten-year lease. There was so much space that Wallace's plans expanded accordingly: in addition to a drop-in center, she would provide transitional housing for nineteen drug-free streetwalkers who wanted to make a new life. These rehabilitated women would clean their own rooms, cook for themselves, and inspire streetwalkers who visited the drop-in center to follow their example.

However, Wallace had not counted on the negative community reaction. Local residents had banded together to work with law-enforcement agencies to rid their Lower East Side neighborhoods of crime, drugs, and prostitution—a fight that had culminated in the padlocking of the very brothel that Wallace had just rented. As they saw it, in their area were concentrated one-third of all the borough's social-service agencies. They felt that they'd done more than their share, and that the problems had been largely solved. Now Joyce Wallace proposed to bring prostitutes back, not only from the immediate area but from all over the city. The residents protested to the local Community Board. In the summer of 1991, after she had removed walls and reconstructed rooms, Wallace began to realize that perhaps the drop-in center might not happen after all. "I started to wake up at three o'clock in the morning with a feeling of terror."

Troubles compounded: In December of 1989, Julio A. Martinez, the state commissioner for drug treatment, was forced to step down after it was found that he had allowed hundreds of thousands of dollars to be spent on inoperative programs, some of which were run by his friends, and that many expenditures had gone unrecorded. At the beginning of the nineties, proposals were put on hold, and programs were cut back dramatically. The elimination of two mobile programs left five Winnebago buses equipped for community service sitting unused in the Brooklyn Navy

Yard. Frank McCorry, the state's director of H.I.V. Services at the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, suggested that, in return for Wallace's giving up the idea of the drop-in center, his agency would contribute one of these buses, along with the two hundred and fifty thousand dollars annually that Wallace had been promised, so that she could service the streetwalker population from a mobile unit. Wallace had no choice but to accept. "He made us into medical gypsies," she says unhappily.

THE Care-Van is parked at the corner of West Twenty-first Street and Surf Avenue in Coney Island. Across the street is the parachute jump, and in the distance one can see the boarded-up Thunderbolt roller coaster, a deserted Ferris wheel, and the Atlantic Ocean beyond. The day is warm, and a prostitute named Wanda and a man she introduces as "my husband, Carlos," are sitting on the steps of the Care-Van while Wallace stands nearby with a mobile phone pressed to her ear. Wanda wears a fake-raccoon jacket and black tights. A scar runs from her forehead to the top of her right cheekbone; part of her right eyelid is missing. Wanda says that while she and her husband were living in the streets she was raped, that she was pregnant at the time and lost the baby, and that the rapist took all their money and identification. Carlos doesn't like her hooking, she says, and they want to get off the streets and into a shelter. "We want to go in today." Since Wanda says she was born in Puerto Rico and has a Social Security number, Wallace wants to put the couple in a shelter until she can get a Social Security card for them, a necessary step in making them eligible for social services.

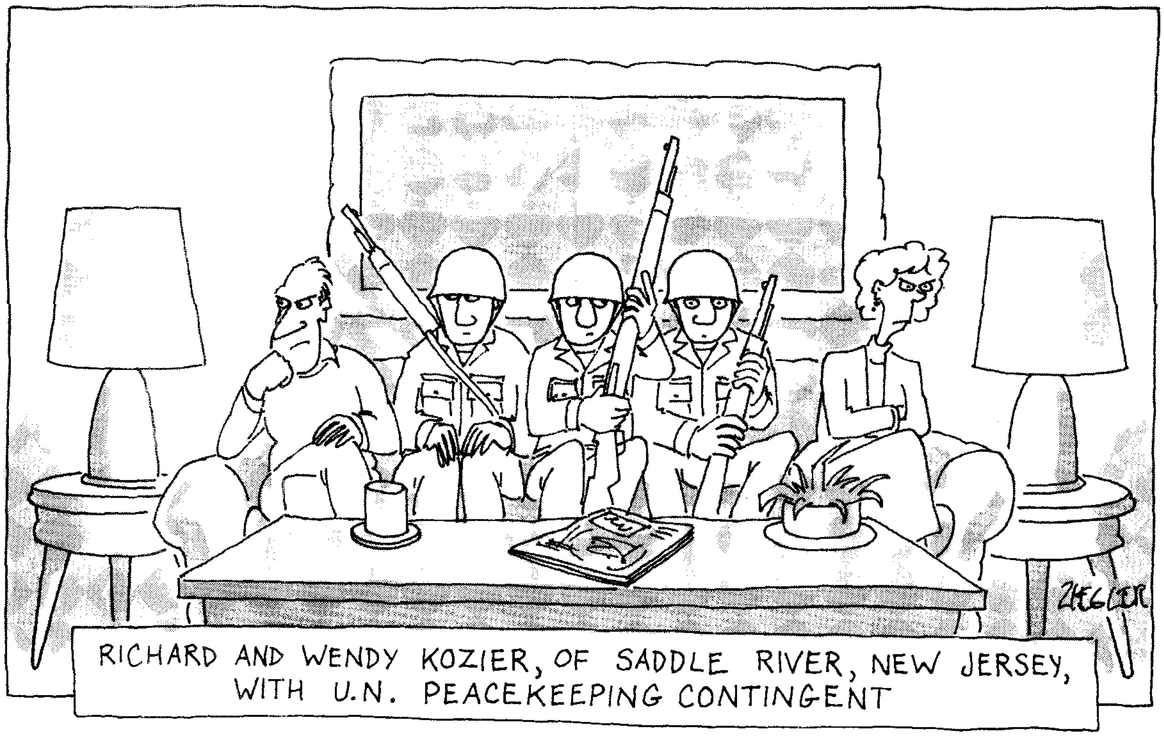
Now Wallace is standing on the sidewalk, screaming into the mobile phone. "No, she won't leave him! What do you mean, they need a marriage certificate? Well, what about the Catherine Street shelter? Aren't there any shelters in this whole city that'll take them? Don't tell me that, Charlie. I don't want to hear that."

Wanda stands up. She seems resigned. "There's no way we can go in together," she says. "I need Carlos, he needs me. Forget it." Before anything further can be said, the two walk away at a fast clip.

Wallace is clearly frustrated, and furious. She begins dialling once again, and barks into the phone, "I want that chest of drawers picked up at my mother's house at Lake Mohegan. We'll be back with the van in two hours. Then Fran can go right up there and get it." This, at least, is one thing that Wallace feels she can control.

WALLACE'S most unqualified success has been the Treatment Readiness Program, an alternative-sentencing program at the Manhattan Criminal Court, at 100 Centre Street, which she feels combats the insensitivity and "revolving-door justice" meted out by our criminal-court system. In 1992, there were 8,600 arraignments for prostitution in New York City. Twelve hundred dollars is the estimated cost of processing, from arrest to arraignment. In other words, more than ten million dollars was spent to harass streetwalkers by jailing them, churning them through the courts, and then turning them back out onto the streets. Many prostitutes who are arrested say they have been arrested more than thirty times in a year.

The statute that is invoked prohibits soliciting for the purpose of prostitution. By law, an arresting officer must observe the streetwalker soliciting a customer, but great numbers of streetwalkers complain of being dragged out of restaurants and stores so that officers could meet their arrest quotas. If prostitutes resist arrest, the treatment is often harsh. At 2 A.M. one day in November, a streetwalker named Aires sat in a 100 Centre Street courtroom waiting for her papers to be processed. Her grossly swollen right hand was wrapped in a bloodstained scarf, and her ankle-length coyote coat was stained with tar. The arresting officer, she said, had chased her down the block, knocked her to the pavement, then yanked her up by her hair, and dragged her to a waiting van. "How fast



RICHARD AND WENDY KOZIER, OF SADDLE RIVER, NEW JERSEY, WITH U.N. PEACEKEEPING CONTINGENT

WHACK!
LEVIN

can you run in five-inch heels, anyway?" she asked ruefully.

A few minutes later, Aires stood at the rear of the courtroom engaged in quiet, intense conversation with a young, blond, crew-cut officer. When she returned, a friend asked, "What was that all about?"

"He wants me and Liz to work a stag party for him next Friday."

With so many prostitutes arrested, the system has been honed to bureaucratic perfection. Streetwalkers' fingerprints are sent to Albany by Fax-IV, a high-speed digital system. Previously, fingerprints were beamed to Albany by an older technology, and if it was raining, or too many microwave ovens were in operation, the signal would be scrambled, which sometimes left streetwalkers in the pens for as long as three days. The new process is the result of a federal lawsuit challenging the city's right to detain defendants more than twenty-four hours.

Last October, conditions in the holding pens in the basement of the criminal-court building were also improved. A coat of cream paint covered the cagelike iron bars, there was fresh linoleum on the floors, and fans had been installed in the windowless space, as had two twenty-five-inch color televisions. Prisoners could reach a telephone by stretching a hand through the bars. There was a stainless-steel half-door in front of the toilet, and one small sink in each pen with a thin cake of soap resting on the side. (Before these improvements, the pens had been infested with rats and roaches, and the toilets had been exposed, so prisoners had to move a large trash can in front of the toilet for privacy.) The women were given cheese and bologna sandwiches, often moldy and inedible, and a cup of tea. Pregnant women could request milk. Two green vinyl gym mats had been added to each of the larger pens to accommodate pregnant women, but there were often so many pregnant women that some had to lie directly on the floor with the other prisoners. Since October, more mats have been added, and there is now a phone inside the pens. Some streetwalkers go to work with a track suit and sneakers in a gym bag, so that they will not have to sleep on the floor, or appear in court, in the flimsy garb of their profession.

Once the fingerprints are returned, no matter what time of day or night, the prostitutes, as a group, are taken from the pens and marched upstairs through a brightly lit narrow tunnel that leads directly to the courtroom door. Once inside, they may wait several hours, seated on a bench, before being processed. This procedure goes on seven days a week, in three shifts around the clock.

Until 1990, when the concept of community policing was introduced and the criminal-justice system began to respond to the needs of neighborhood residents, streetwalkers were generally sentenced to "time served"—that is, the time they had been held in custody—and now and then to a fine averaging a hundred dollars. But that year the police initiated the Safe Streets, Safe City program, which attempted to address the law-enforcement needs of particular communities. A year later, under pressure from community groups, the Manhattan District Attorney's office announced that it was prepared to prosecute prostitution cases actively, and seek fines of two hundred and fifty to five hundred dollars and some jail time. Judges, however, being free to pronounce any sentence they saw fit, proved reluctant to follow this practice. One, Judge Gustin L. Reichbach, felt he was simply playing a role "in a vulgar spectacle. We'd drink lots of coffee, and at 6 A.M. someone would say, 'Bring out the girls!' They'd march in the streetwalkers and there'd be such comments as 'Bring it over here, sister.' Nobody was accomplishing anything." Reichbach decided to call Joyce Wallace.

Early one morning in March of 1991, Reichbach sentenced nine startled prostitutes to "thirty-six hours off the streets to think about what we're doing here." He suggested that they could voluntarily talk to Wallace, who was seated at a table in the rear of the courtroom. She handed out condoms and literature on AIDS prevention and drug rehabilitation, and told the prostitutes that the Care-Van was parked outside the courthouse for free H.I.V. testing. Seven of the nine women agreed to be tested. One prostitute started to leave the courtroom, then turned, approached the bench, and said, "Judge, I've been in court hundreds of times and this is the first time anyone ever treated me like a human being."

Reichbach and Wallace had provided the genesis for the Treatment Readiness Program. Reichbach was reassigned to

Civil Court, and Wallace, with Barbara Hoffmann, a Ph.D. candidate at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, applied for a grant of a hundred and fifteen thousand dollars from the Medical and Health Research Association of New York, to administer a two-day alternative-sentencing program addressing the need for sex and AIDS education and drug rehabilitation.

Room 1600-A of the Manhattan Criminal Court is an airy chamber resembling a schoolroom, with a counter on which there are coffee, mugs, a container of milk, and four boxes of granulated sugar. (Substance abusers use great quantities of sugar in their coffee.) Gathered around brown rectangular tables are twenty-eight low-level-misdemeanor offenders (no felony offenses are permitted) who have been sentenced to the Treatment Readiness Program. Guy Wolf, a drug-treatment and counselling expert, holds up various types of condoms and explains their properties. He warns that H.I.V. can penetrate condoms made of animal membrane, and that the only reliable condoms are of latex, used with a water-based lubricant that contains nonoxynol-9. Oil-based lubricants such as Vaseline or hand lotion weaken condoms, he says.

"Or mayonnaise," one of the prostitutes says. "I had a date who wanted to use that."

"Why doesn't the F.D.A. get in on this and only approve latex condoms?" another streetwalker asks.

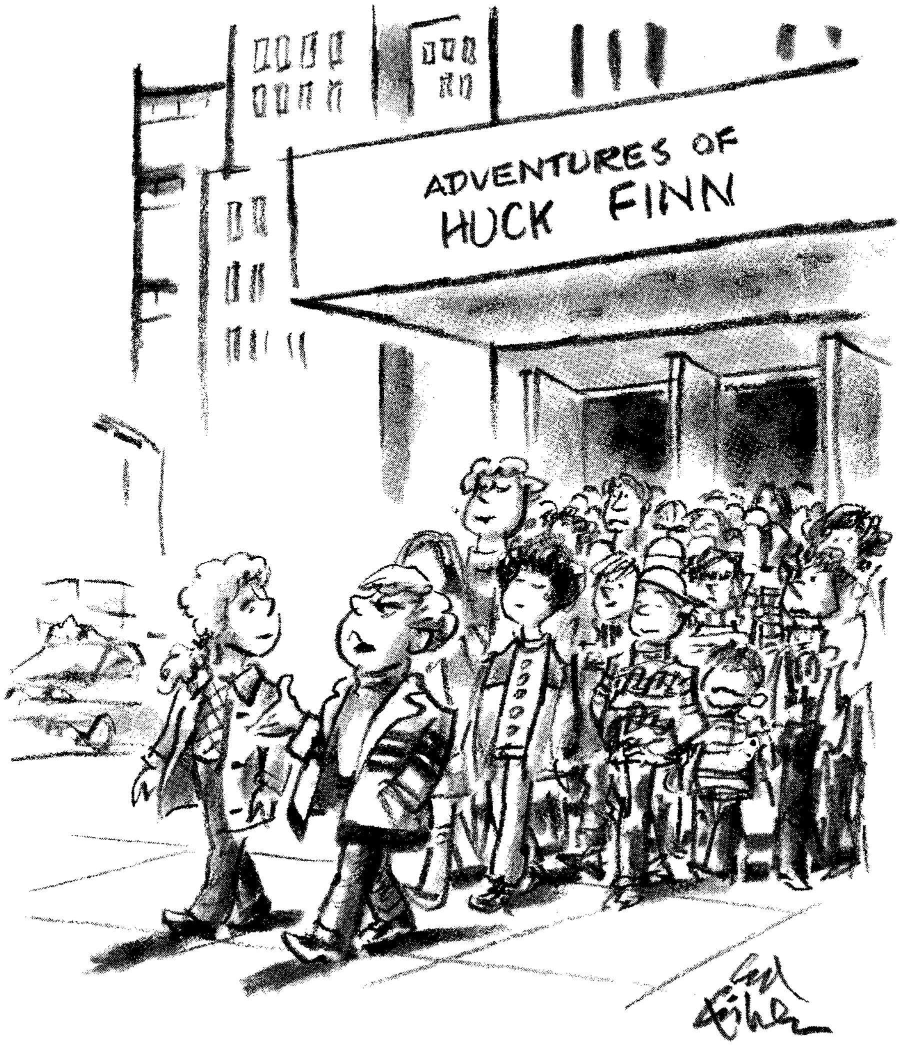
Barbara Hoffmann discusses the patterns of addiction, and provides information about the services available to aid in rehabilitation. Arrangements are made for those convicted of drug possession to visit a rehabilitation program the following afternoon, and for the prostitutes to meet for a discussion group.

"Let's face it, who likes to suck dick for a living?" The speaker, whose street name is Krystle (after a "Dynasty" character; often streetwalkers adopt names with celebrity or fantasy connotations), is a slight girl with pale skin, green eyes, and black-rooted hair descending into a long bright-gold ponytail. On Eleventh Avenue, her working clothes are a G-string and an unzipped, easily opened blue silk parka over bare breasts. Today, she wears a size-6 tracksuit jacket, tie-dyed in a melange of pastel blue, aqua, and mauve, over aqua pants, aqua socks, and clean white Reeboks. Krystle lives in New Jersey, in an apartment with two "wife-in-laws"—prostitutes who share the same pimp. She has a daughter of two (who lives in Ohio with Krystle's mother), is drug-free, has a private doctor, likes to shop at Riverside Square Mall, and owns a 1987 Mercedes 560SL white convertible, which she says she bought with only three months' earnings. In the four years she has been on the street, she has been arrested more than seventy times. At the time of her first arrest, she told the police she was nineteen, but she was really fifteen. For her nineteenth birthday, she explains amid giggles, her pimp took her and her wife-in-laws to Great Adventure. "You shoulda seen him laughing and goin' on the rides. You wouldanah believed it."

Barbara Hoffmann and a female psychotherapist named Randy Kasper frequently alternate as discussion leaders. "These women exist behind an emotional wall—they take drugs to preserve their illusions," Kasper explains. "They act as if their job is like any other. And it's frustrating. We can't do much in one session, but we can open the door a bit, so they'll know we're here when they're ready."

On the street, danger is omnipresent. If a prostitute disappears, no one asks any questions; many prostitute deaths go unnoted. The girls have their own rules, which they discuss in the Treatment Readiness Program: Never enter a car with more than one man in it. Check under the seat for a weapon. Make sure the keys are out of the ignition when you start. Tell him to put his hands on the dashboard, or one on your back and you hold the other. Make sure the doors are unlocked. Don't work if you're high—it can cause an error in judgment.

Streetwalkers' defenses are few. They



"At last! A cinematic version of Twain's classic tale that truly represents our generation's ethos."

explain that instinct means survival. "If a john doesn't smell right, I pass him up," one says, and another says, "Watch out if he offers too much money."

At a break in the session, Krystle tells, over a cup of coffee, how she was picked up by a john the previous evening: "We parked. I was in the back seat and he said, 'I want to give you more money.' Then he reached over and came back up with this big knife. 'I'm going to give you what you deserve,' he said, and pinned me under him. I thought, This is *it*, but I said, calmlike, 'Look, honey, I can't do you when you're on top of me—you sit up so I can.' He got up offa me, and I grabbed the door handle, opened the door, and got the hell out. You shoulda seen me run. Man, it was fuckin' fast!" Three times during the session, Krystle compulsively repeats this story.

Kasper asks, "How many of you would like to get out of this life?"

Maria, a Hispanic girl with striking, almond-shaped, amber eyes, and dark brown hair dyed to a rusty dull orange, speaks up. "It's not that simple. I got no skills, no schoolin'."

"That's right," says Shirley, a pregnant, freckle-faced redhead wearing a heart-shaped locket that contains a snapshot of a smiling blond boy. "Don't ask me to leave the life. I can't do nine to five—I tried it for three years. I like the action. You get used to it. I like the life. If you asked me to change one five-dollar-an-hour job for another, I'd say sure, so what? But, let's face it, where else can I make this kind of money? Some weeks, I take in three thousand dollars, and that's tax-free." She giggles.

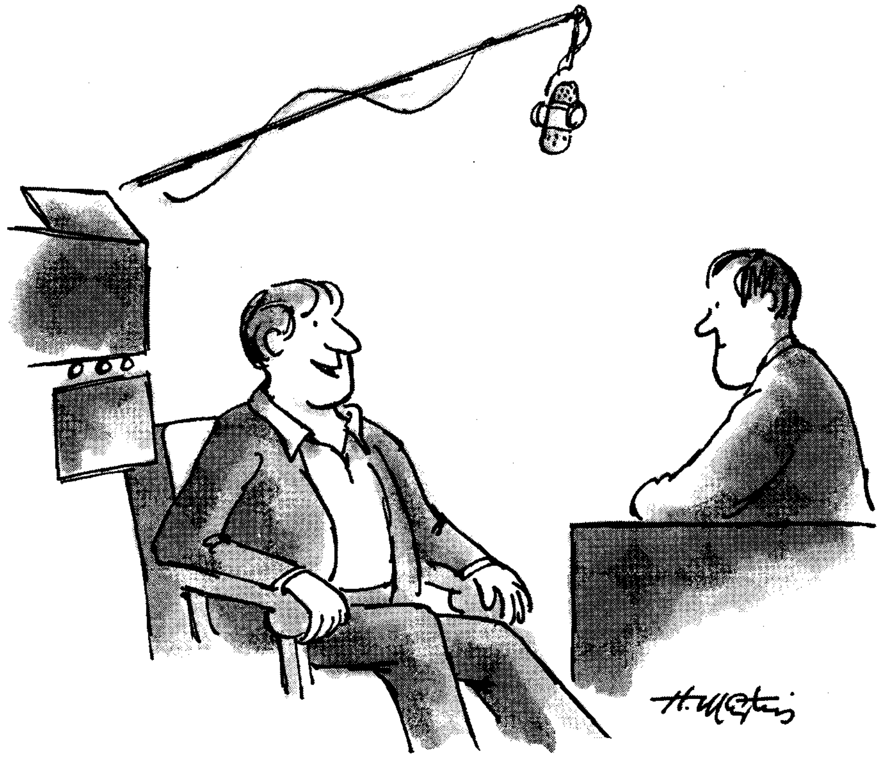
"What do you do with the money?" Kasper asks.

"Me? I'm going to open up a beauty salon as soon as I get ten thousand dollars," Shirley says.

"But if you make three thousand dollars a week surely you've earned that many times over."

"I guess, but something always happens."

THE iron grille at 175 East Houston Street has been replaced with a wood door. On the first floor, to the left of the narrow staircase, is a large office. Its center area contains a small refrigerator, a counter, and a copier. To the rear are two more offices. Vivid floral paintings decorate the walls. From the floor above, the incessant pounding of renovators can be heard as they install an extra bathroom. Unable to find funding for transitional housing for drug-free streetwalkers, Wallace has instead managed to get a five-hundred-thousand-dollar grant to house fifteen homeless people with AIDS.



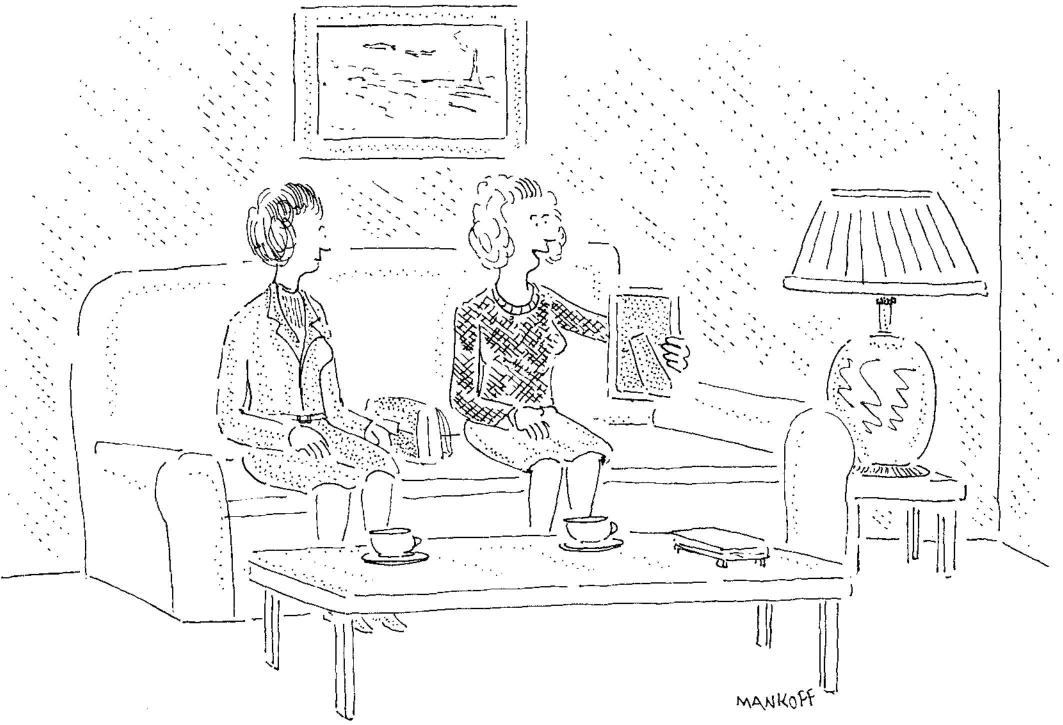
"If this will help your ratings, Jay, I think your listeners would be interested to learn that while I was breaking into show business I constructed an A-bomb, which I dismantled after I got my first major part."

In the back office, Allannah Thomas is on the telephone trying to place a streetwalker in detox. None of the centers she calls has a place, but, finally, St. Luke's says that it might have a bed if her client comes in tomorrow between 6 and 6:30 A.M.

"There's a bottleneck in detox," Wallace says. Like much else concerning social services, the problem is complicated by the fact that most drug-treatment facilities do not accommodate homeless streetwalkers. Detoxification facilities are effective for heroin addicts only. Some agencies feel that even heroin detoxification is an unnecessary step, in that one can go immediately into a methadone program, but for streetwalkers who have no place to live a detox bed provides a safe harbor.

Detoxification itself is the last step in a long bureaucratic process—one that few streetwalking prostitutes complete. The majority of these women have none of the necessary paperwork: no Social Security card, no Medicaid, no way into the system. To qualify for Medicaid, a citizen must first secure a birth certificate—if she is a native, from the Division of Vital Records of the City of New York; the fee is fifteen dollars. She has to get a Social Security card; it takes four to six weeks by mail, or standing in line at the local Social Security office. Of course, one must provide an address, and for the homeless this becomes a problem. Once these documents arrive, an appointment must be made (and not broken) to secure a letter stating that Medicaid is being processed. Only then does one become eligible for most detoxification beds. During this time, efforts may have been made to put the streetwalker in a shelter—one in which people are not shooting heroin or smoking crack.

The same red tape applies to H.I.V.-infected streetwalkers. Services are hard to come by until AIDS is full-blown (after which the women live an average of fifteen months). At this point, Wallace may give a streetwalker a complete physical and fill out an M-11q form from the Office of Home Care Services. If it indicates that one of the stipulated conditions is in evidence, she now qualifies for assistance. But FROST’D’s outreach workers tell of entire days spent accompanying streetwalkers to the various agencies that they could not hope to negotiate on their own.



“Well, at least he died doing what he loved best—flippin’ the bird at some eighteen-wheeler on I-95.”

• •

IN the space of nine months, Wallace’s organization expanded from a small research-and-humanitarian effort administering one project to a multipurpose service agency. The growing pains have been acute. One FROST’D board member, an ex-prostitute and ex-heroin addict who also works with a prostitute-advocacy organization, says of Wallace, “Joyce is the quintessential Jewish mama. Metaphorically, she runs everything out of her purse. You could just as soon see her reach in for a condom, a kid’s lollipop, or an aspirin. She wants to do everything, and right away. She can’t prioritize or delegate responsibility—she’s all over the lot, burned out by death and responsibility. She doesn’t believe in the establishment, because it’s failed her. But what she has is a vision.”

Dr. Mathilde Krim, the chairman of AmFAR, the American Foundation for AIDS Research, has known Wallace since the early eighties. “Wallace never worked within an institution,” she says. “She has trouble letting go of certain details. She’s tempted to do too much. But when you see that population you do want to do it all, and they need so many things: medical care, clean clothes, counselling, job training, AIDS education. The list is endless.”

In June of last year, Wallace received $17,448 from AmFAR, as the first payment on a seventy-thousand-dollar grant to operate a needle-exchange program. However, AmFAR personnel who made site visits to the Care-Van submitted critical reports, questioning not only whether the Care-Van staff could properly administer syringe-exchange services but also whether the services they already provided were efficient. In November, the grant was suspended for a period of six months, after which AmFAR will schedule another visit to determine whether the areas of concern have been addressed. Also, the operation of the Off the Street Mobile Unit has been delayed for a year and a half by red tape, vandalism, and just plain bad luck: when the Winnebago made a recent trip to the Hunts Point market, its heating unit was still inoperable and a water tank for its shower needed cleaning and repair. But the streetwalkers welcomed the sandwiches, warm sweaters, and counselling that were provided. On the Winnebago are Social Security and birth-certificate forms that will be processed by FROST’D personnel, thereby moving streetwalkers through the system.

The logistics are formidable, but logistics aren’t the only problem. In trying to help these women, activists are also trying to repair core problems of society—sexual abuse, drug addiction, legal malfunctions—that may be irreparable. It’s little wonder, perhaps, that the workers can become abrasive, opinionated, and extremely annoying to scientists, who pride themselves on methodological purity, and to administrators, who prefer bureaucratic steadiness to intemperate zeal.

“Maybe I should take a course in administration,” Wallace says during a telephone conversation. Nevertheless, she feels that things are beginning to fall into place, and she still has utopian plans for the future. “I *am* going to have a drop-in center somewhere. I have permission from Community Board 4, but so far I have no money. There should be drop-in centers near every stroll—at least seven of them. And I want a safe house—an apartment in a nice building with six or eight beds and a resident manager. There’s a real need for an emergency medical center where streetwalkers, pimps, drug addicts—any people who feel they might harm themselves or others or commit a crime—can get immediate attention. Wait a second—I’ve got to put some clothes in the washing machine.” Several minutes pass before Wallace comes back on. She resumes as if nothing had happened. “That’ll cost two and a half million dollars. Let’s see, I have to apply under Article 28 to have FROST’D licensed as a health-care provider, and then maybe I can get a million and a half from the Rockefeller Foundation. Do you know anyone there?” ♦

POSTSCRIPT

MARIAN ANDERSON

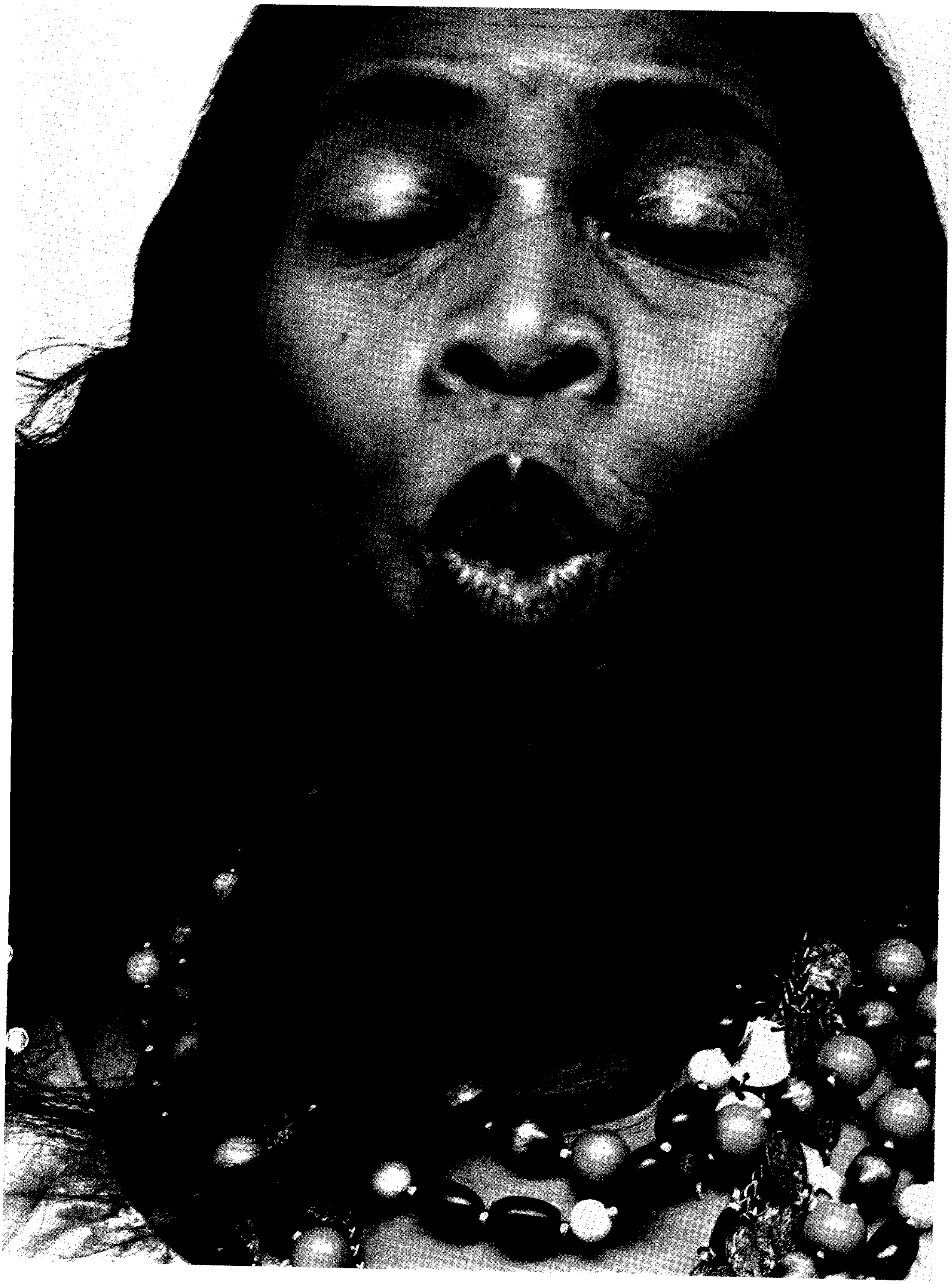
BY ANTHONY HEILBUT

MARIAN ANDERSON represented an old style of American gentility. She did not cherish disturbances. Franz Rupp, her accompanist for nearly three decades, boasted that they never quarrelled. She never wanted—indeed, she actively declined—a political role. Yet the main event mentioned in all the obituaries that appeared the week she died was nothing if not political—her 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial, which was arranged by Eleanor Roosevelt after the Daughters of the American Revolution refused to let Anderson appear at Constitution Hall, on their sacrosanct whites-only stage. Even now, reports of that concert, attended by seventy-five thousand people, remain gripping. Here, apparently, was that rare defining moment when art and ethics coincide. A moment it was: not until 1954 did integration become the law of the land.

Anderson's troubles did not end in 1939. During the Second World War, she and Rupp toured the country. They were a charming duo, he a stalwart five feet three, she a regal five feet nine. It was his habit to close each concert by kissing her hand, a gesture both ardent and, given the difference in their size, good-humored. When managers of auditoriums in the South protested, he would say, "It's your hall but our program." Many nights, as they strolled off, the audience, so lately enthralled by their musicianship, burst into catcalls. These audiences were composed not of dung-kicking Bubbas but of the South's most refined classes.

Marian Anderson first sang spirituals as a child, in Philadelphia's Union Baptist Church, whose members became her earliest sponsors. Those spirituals, vehicles of imposing dignity, always moved Anderson's listeners. But her voice was, during its prime, confined to the recitalists' arena. Not until 1955, when she was fifty-seven, was she given the opportunity to make her Metropolitan Opera début. What she might have achieved if that chance had come earlier remains a question. In its answer lies one reason that America remembers her with such a hopeless tangle of pride and shame. ♦

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD AVEDON
New York City, June 30, 1955.



FICTION

THE GUIDE

BY MELANIE SUMNER

At the gate of the Grand Hôtel de Mali, a brothel that served as an inn for the rare tourist in Oulaba, Darren reached inside her shirt and paid off her first guide. The child had only carried her pack up the short path from the road, and his dark eyes grew round as he took the one-hundred-C.F.A. coin into his fist. Immediately, the other boys attacked him, snatching at the money. "White lady!" one of the children shouted in French. "We all led you here. We are all your guides, and you must pay all of us!"

Darren shook her head, banged the gate shut behind her, and went down a dark corridor. Behind one of the closed doors a whore wailed. Her voice rose and fell like a siren, now laughing, now crying, following Darren down and around the halls to the courtyard, where the sound of television drowned it out. A black-and-white set perched precariously on a stack of crates, balanced by two rabbit ears. Beneath the screen, Malians sat on mats, mesmerized by a fuzzy, French-dubbed episode of "Dallas." They barely turned their heads as the small, pale American wearing a man's felt hat crossed the courtyard to the bar.

"*Bonsoir, Madame,*" she said to the stout woman leaning in the doorway. "*Je m'appelle Darren.*" She asked for a room for the night.

The hotelkeeper looked her over. She uncrossed her arms to wipe her hands on the faded *pagne* cloth wrapped around her hips and reaching to her ankles. Then she folded her arms back over her chest and returned her gaze to the white woman in bed with a lover on the TV screen. The gold ring in the hotelkeeper's nose glinted in the dim light.

From a shadowy corner of the room, a boy stepped forward. "*Bonsoir, Madame Darren,*" he said. He bowed low, like a magician on stage, and said in French, "Please excuse my mother, for she doesn't speak the languages of the first world. My name is Jaraffe, and I am at your disposal." He offered a brilliant smile. "American, I presume? Americans are my favorite people. How do you find Mali? If you care to see our cliffs tomorrow, I am pleased to be your guide. You are tired. Perhaps you would like a beer? I suggest the imported beer. Normally, of course, one can't find such luxuries in Oulaba, but this is your lucky day." He lifted his thin shoulders in an elegant shrug.

She wanted to laugh at him, but she was stunned by his beauty. He was slender, with skin the color of honey, and silky black curls that fell into damp ringlets at the nape of his neck. His nose was precise and delicate; his lips curved salaciously, blood-red against small, even, white teeth. A new T-shirt, several sizes too large, slid off one shoulder, baring the bones of his chest. As she studied him, he kept his head demurely bowed, hiding his eyes beneath their lashes, but suddenly he raised his head and stared back. He had the yellow eyes of a cat.

"How old are you, Jaraffe?"

"Me? Well, I am thirteen. No, not thirteen. Did I say thirteen?" He affected a bemused chuckle and stretched himself up taller. "I am fourteen, actually. Almost fifteen."

"I'll have the imported beer," she said, sure that he would return with a flat, warm Gazelle, or something worse, and a long explanation. She sat down at a low, rusty table and rested her head in her hands. In a few moments, he reappeared with an icy bottle of Heineken. She held her hand out for it before she caught herself.

Then she narrowed her eyes in the expression of jaded wariness that she adopted in her dealings with Africans. The expression was fake. She was alone and, more or less, lost. In a leather pouch hanging from her neck and tucked inside her khaki pants she had five hundred dollars, more money than the average African earned in a year. If she had to, she would pay an outrageous price for the cold beer, and the child knew this. "How much?" she asked.

"For you, my friend, seven hundred C.F.A."

"Six hundred."

He shrugged, handed her the bottle, and returned to a stool in the corner. After a weary sigh, he removed a crumpled cigarette from his shirt pocket and approached her again. "Do you have a light, Darren?" When she shook her head, he found some matches in his pocket, smiled apologetically, and, lighting his cigarette, sat down beside her.

The game began. Darren considered telling him that she had not invited him to sit with her, but she was too tired to get tangled in the absurd exchange that would inevitably follow such a statement, and, after all, Jaraffe was only a boy.

Three days ago she had set out from her Peace Corps station in Senegal on an odyssey to Timbuktu, and since then she had not had a moment's respite from African men who considered any young, white woman travelling alone to be public property. Her furious protests were as delightful to these men as if they came from the mouth of an unbranded cow wandering in their fields. On the first hour of the train ride from Dakar to Bamako, a note was pressed into her hand:

> Hello my American frend. I find you is so very nice for me. So yes you pleese me. I love you. Now we will be together. Nice.

For the next twenty hours, no matter where she sat on the train, the man wedged himself beside her, smiling indulgently at her rejections. He did not consider himself rude.

Now, having gained a seat at her table, Jaraffe sailed into the relationship. "Are you married, if you don't mind my asking?" Smoke curled softly out of his lips and hung in the moist air between them. He wasn't inhaling.

"Yes," she lied.

"Your husband is an oil tycoon, perhaps? Or a doctor? It's none of my business. I myself will be a surgeon. When I have saved enough money, I am going to America to study medicine. Now, when I am not in school, I work as a guide. I give most of the pay to my mother, of course, but I save what I can for my journey to America. Perhaps you and your husband would like me to take you to the cliffs tomorrow? We can go and return in a single day, if you like."

"I wasn't . . . my husband and I weren't planning to go to the cliffs."

With a wave of his hand, he dismissed this detail. "I know the cliffs. The other boys will ask to be your guide, but, unfortunately, they are all liars and thieves."

"Thanks for the information, but we don't need a guide."

He smiled at her bad French and continued. "For you, my friend, I will only charge fifteen thousand C.F.A. a day, or fifty American dollars if you like. You see, I must go into the cliffs tomorrow anyway, because I have a secret mission there. My father is a marabout—a magician, if you will. He can turn rocks into coins, he can make your enemies run when they see you coming down the path, and he can make it rain." He paused, watching her with his yellow eyes. "He can make the dead rise again."

Darren nodded.

"I see that you don't believe me, but that is understandable. Even in a country as great as America, you have never seen anything like this. Tomorrow my father is coming here to show his magic in the courtyard, and then you will see that Africans may be poor, but we have special powers." When she glanced over his shoulder, he said, "All right. This is a special price for you only. Thirteen thousand C.F.A. It's all settled."

ONE OF THE TEN BEST HAIR DAYS OF THE YEAR
8 1/2
R. Chast

A gendarme stomped into the room, pushing a drunk ahead of him. "Jaraffe!" the drunk shouted. The boy jumped up to run from the room, but the drunk lunged and punched him in the face. Then Jaraffe's mother came forward, and with one smooth swing of her arm she struck the drunk on the temple. He slid down in the gendarme's arms, his head hanging to one side, his mouth open. Jaraffe was gone.

"*Voilà!*" cried the gendarme, who was also drunk. He shouted gaily in Bambara as he dragged his prisoner across the floor and propped him against the wall like a sack of millet. The woman crossed her arms back over her chest and said nothing. Again, the gendarme cried, "*Voilà!*" He was a handsome, barrel-chested man in a khaki uniform, with skin as black and gleaming as the pistol that hung in the holster skewed around his hips. He turned his attention to Darren. "Excuse us, Madame!" he roared. "*Bonsoir. . . . Madame américaine? Ou Madame française?* I hope we are not disturbing you."

"*C'est Madame américaine,*" she said firmly.

"*Monsieur Gendarme. Enchanté.*" He thrust his hand forward. "*Bière!*" he shouted, and dropped down on the bench beside her. "Are you in Oulaba to visit our spectacular cliffs?"

"No," she said. "I was on my way to Timbuktu. I was going to fly out of Mopti, but—" She stopped, remembering that he was a gendarme. In Mopti, the police had discovered that she wasn't carrying the *license de photographie* they required of all foreigners with cameras. The fine for this crime was the camera itself, or jail. Using the alibi that she was going back to her hotel to get the permit, she had jumped into the first available jitney, ending up in Oulaba, a town that wasn't even on her map. Now she forced a thin smile. "The boy here, Jaraffe, offered to be my guide. Do you know him?"

"You want Jaraffe? I'll sell him cheap." He slammed his fist on the table, shaking Darren's bottle, and threw his head back to laugh.

"Is he a bandit?"

"No! I can't sell bandits cheap. The bandits are expensive!" He howled at his own joke and then composed himself.

"*C'est 'Madame' américaine, ou 'Mademoiselle'?*"

"*C'est Madame.*"

"I like your hat, Madame," he said. He peered under the brim at her face. "Give it to me."

"Tomorrow," she said.

"Ah, you know Africa too well!" He shouted for Jaraffe. The doorway to the bar remained empty. "The boy is ashamed," said the gendarme. He took a drink and turned the bottle around in his broad hand. For a moment his brow creased into deep lines. His voice became maudlin. "That's the boy's father," he said, inclining his head to the drunk on the floor.

Darren turned to look at the man slumped against the wall. His robe was torn and soiled to the uniform gray of fools' rags, and the nails on his hands were twisted and yellow, like the nails of a madman. A thin line of blood dribbled from his slack mouth.

Three whores walked into the room, dressed in tight miniskirts and stiletto heels. They laughed at Darren in her hat. One of them sat beside her and said, "You are my sister." She reeked of beer and cheap perfume, and her painted mouth was frightening.

Darren motioned to Jaraffe's mother, who led her across the courtyard and down the corridor to a door she opened with a skeleton key. The room had a concrete floor and walls, and near the ceiling there was one tiny window with no pane, crossed with iron bars. The foam mattress on the floor was covered with a dirty *pagne*. "*Merci, ma mère*," said Darren. The woman almost smiled as she tucked Darren's two bills into her bra. Talking rapidly in Bambara, she locked and unlocked the door several times, and Darren nodded. "Yes, I'll lock it," she said in English. "Thanks."

In the morning, in the bloody light of the rising sun, Darren saw the cliffs for the first time. They rose up and shimmered all around the dusty village like huge gold nuggets piled by the hands of giants. No matter where she turned her head, she saw the low, golden mountains, scintillating in the sun like broken glass. They drew her toward them. Reason told her that mountains are generally farther away and higher than they seem, that she was an inexperienced climber and would not be safe out there alone; but although Darren always put on a great show of being practical in front of other people, when left to her own devices she was as hapless as a child alone on the moon.

Her only concern was that Jaraffe might find her and insist on being her guide, so she shouldered her pack and hurried down the road. At the market she stopped to fill her pack with whatever seemed edible: dried dates, canned sardines, a strange fruit that rattled when she shook it. "Cheese?" she asked. "Bread?" But the women just shook their heads and laughed, holding out their rough palms for money. She wondered how Jaraffe had been able to get his hands on a Heineken. He was not among the pack of children who followed her to the edge of town, calling "Hey, white lady, look at me. I am your guide!"

The children escorted her to the banks of a muddy river where young women waded with their *pagnes* pulled up over their thighs, balancing brightly colored plastic buckets on their heads. One of them knelt and drank. They all watched curiously as Darren pulled off her expensive new hiking boots and rolled her jeans up to her knees, and when she waded across with the pack on her back, they shouted to one another and laughed.

"*Au revoir!*" the children yelled from the bank. "*À bientôt!*" The bravest boys smacked their lips to make loud kissing noises as she went down the narrow, sandy path and curved out of their vision.

She had to keep herself from breaking into a run. The desert opened up all around her, and she gulped the fresh air until her throat was parched. Within half an hour she began to burn. The sun bored through the sunscreen on her face and arms, resting on her soft, freckled skin like a warm iron. Already, the stiff leather of her boots was cutting blisters on her feet. She didn't care. She shifted the light pack on her shoulders and marched on, imagining telling her brothers in Tennessee about this adventure. As a child, she used to stand crying in the doorway when they left the house in their oiled hiking boots, shouldering heavy packs of Bunsen burners, gorp, and powdered eggs. "We girls have to stay home," her mother said, and she tried to teach Darren how to knit. What was a lap of tangled yarn compared to entry into the horizon? When the boys came home, smelling of woodsmoke, sweat, and leaves, she ripped out every stitch she had painstak-

NEW LIFE

Imagine that war is over, that peace has resumed its reign.
That you can still make a mirror. That it's a cuckoo
or a magpie, and not a Junkers, that chirps in the twigs again.
That a window frames not a town's rubble but its rococo,
palms, magnolias, pine trees, tenacious ivy, grass,
laurel. That the cast-iron lace the moon used to shepherd
clouds in endured in the end the onslaught of mimosa, plus
bursts of agave. That life must start from the very threshold.

People exit their rooms, where chairs like the letter "b" or else
"h" shield them from vertigo on occasion.
They are of use to nobody save themselves,
pavement flagstones, the rules of multiplication.
That's the impact of statues. Of their empty niches, more
accurately. Well, failing sanctity, one still can use its byword.
Imagine that this is all true. Imagine you speak of your
self while speaking of them, of anything extra, sideward.

Life starts anew indeed like this—with a painted view
of a volcanic eruption, of a dinghy high waves beleaguer.
With the attendant feeling it's only you
who survey the disaster. With the feeling that you are eager
to shift your gaze any moment, catch sight of a couch, a blast
of peonies in a Chinese vase, sallow against the plaster.
Their garish colors, their wilting mouths must
be, in their turn, harbingers of a disaster.

Each thing is vulnerable. The very thought about
a thing gets quickly forgotten. Things are, in truth, the leeches
of thought. Hence their shapes—each one is a brain's cutout—
their attachment to place, their Penelope features;
i.e., their taste for the future. At sunrise, a rooster's heard.
Stepping out of the tub, wrapped in a bedsheet's linen
in a hotel in the new life, you lord the herd
of four-legged furniture, mahogany and cast iron.

Imagine that epics shrink into idylls. That words are but
the converse of flame's long tongues, of that raging sermon
which used to devour your betters greedily like dry wood.
That flame found it difficult to determine

your worth, not to mention warmth. That's why you've survived intact.
That's why you can stomach apathy, that's why you feel fit to mingle
with the pomonae, vertumni, ceres this place is packed
with. That's why on your lips is this shepherd's jingle.

For how long can one justify oneself? However you hide the ace,
the table gets hit with jacks of some odd suit and tailor.
Imagine that the more sincere the voice, the less in it is the trace
of love for no matter what, of anger, of tears, of terror.
Imagine your wireless catching at times your old anthem's hum.
Imagine that here, too, each letter is trailed by a weaning
retinue of its likes, forming blindly now "betsy," now "ibrahim,"
dragging the pen past the limits of alphabet and meaning.

Twilight in the new life. Cicadas that don't relent.
A classicistic perspective that lacks a tank or,
barring that, dank fog patches to obfuscate its end;
a bare parquet floor that never sustained a tango.
In the new life, no one begs the moment, "Stay!"
Brought to a standstill, it quickly succumbs to dotage.
And your features, on top of that, are glazed enough anyway
for scratching "Hi" on their matte side and attaching postage.

The white stuccoed walls of a room are turning more white because
of a glance shot in their direction and boding censure,
steeped not so much in great meadows' morose repose
as in the spectrum's lack of their self-negating tincture.
A thing can be pardoned plenty. Especially where it cones,
where it reaches its end. Ultimately, one's unbound
curiosity about these empty zones,
about these objectless vistas, is what art seems to be all about.

In the new life, a cloud is better than the bright sun. The rain,
akin to self-knowledge, appears perpetual.
On the other hand, an unexpected train
you don't wait for alone on a platform arrives on schedule.
A sail is passing its judgment on the horizon's lie.
The eye tracks the sinking soap, though it's the foam that's famous.
And should anyone ask you "Who are you?" you reply, "Who—I?
I am Nobody," as Ulysses once muttered to Polyphemus.

—JOSEPH BRODSKY

(*Translated, from the Russian, by David MacFadyen and the author.*)

---

ingly knitted in the sweater sleeve. "I'm a prisoner!" she yelled. "I'll run away! You'll see!" Her mother told her to keep her voice down, and the brothers smirked.

As the sun rose higher, the cliffs lost their golden sheen and became hot, dry rocks. Darren had no sense of measure; the mountain could have been a thousand or ten thousand feet high, but the top of it seemed rather close to the clouds. When she began her climb, some of the rocks tipped under her weight. There was no sound but the dry scrape of her breathing and the slide of her boots.

Then the silence broke. "Darren!" a thin voice called. She looked at the bare rock all around her and up at the wide, empty sky. "*Madame Darren!* I am here!" Two yards away, through a wide crack in the rock, Jaraffe poked out his curly head. Her heart sank.

"*Quelle bonne surprise!*" he exclaimed, slithering out of the rock and landing on his feet like a cat. A purple bruise shone around one eye. "Here I was, just going along on my secret mission, all alone, and I find Madame Darren, my American friend!" He grinned from ear to ear. "And you're all red and tired but still so beautiful. Were you frightened and lonely? Dismiss all your fears—your guide has found you."

She had been warned about this. If she refused his services out here, he would follow her back to town and tell everyone that he had guided her but she had refused to pay him. If she did accept him now as a guide, there would be no one to witness the bargain, and he might do the same thing.

"Where are your shoes, Jaraffe?"

He glanced down at his dusty feet as if he fully expected to find shoes there, then looked up and shrugged. His hands were as small as sparrows, and when he held them out by his sides, palms up, he appeared to be the most vulnerable little boy on earth. Suddenly she was furious.

"How much do you charge for this tour?"

At the nasty tone of her voice he raised his eyebrows in a perfect arc. He dragged one toe along the rock. "Two hundred American dollars."

She laughed, and he joined her in a child's falsetto. She raised her hand to him. "You are a child, and you will speak to me with respect!" When he ducked, she was ashamed of herself.

Out of reach, he smirked contemptuously and said, "Well, of course, I am actually here on a secret mission for my father, as I explained last night, and so if you choose to follow me, well, then I assure you that you will see what no tourist ever sees. I thought you were my friend, and so I had planned to show you a cave filled with Dogon burial treasure. But this obviously bores Madame, and so I beg her pardon."

"You lie, boy." He looked at her, and for a moment she was afraid, but she continued, raising her voice. "There is no sacred treasure, and your father is not a magician."

"You lie!" he yelled. "You don't have a husband. You lie, and also you speak French like a dog!" He stepped back from her and mocked her accent, laughing in a high whine.

"Your father isn't a magician, he's a drunk."

Blood rose to his cheeks, and his eyes turned almost black. "Whore! Dog-French white-lady whore!"

"Well, you've lost your fancy manners,

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haven't you?" she said softly in English. "You snot-nosed little brat."

For an instant he gazed at her mouth, wrinkling his smooth brow, as if the words still hung about her lips and might be grasped, but then he turned his head away. "I don't understand your language, and I hope the hyenas eat you."

"Five thousand C.F.A.," she said in French. "Or fifteen American dollars. That's the price, if I see the Dogon burial cave."

He spit. Then he jumped, from one rock to the next, leaping the boulders like a goat until he was gone.

Soon she heard his spook sounds—strange whistles and long, sad wails echoing in the caves inside the cliff. Clinging to the rock, she inched her way toward the sky. At noon, when she stopped to eat, her body trembled. Sweat stung her dry lips, salting the food as she put it in her mouth. The warm, heavily chlorinated water was delicious, and she was sorry she hadn't brought more than one canteen. She removed her hat, stretched out on the rock beneath an overhang, and dozed.

First, she sensed his presence. When he was close enough, she smelled his sweet, child's sweat, already familiar.

"Six thousand C.F.A.," she said, without opening her eyes. He did not answer. Instead, he touched her sunglasses, and then her hair. He was leaning over her face now, so close that his breath stirred the tiny hairs in her nose. She felt the wet, exquisite curve of his lips on her ear, whispering in a strange tongue. Then she sneezed.

Abruptly, she sat up. "What is your problem?" she yelled in English. He stared at her mouth, his eyes large and dark, the purple bruise glistening. He smiled hopefully. "If this desert were hell, you'd be Satan," she said. She continued to speak in English as she busied her shaking hands with the water bottle. She gave him a drink. "Where are your shoes? Are you hungry? Here, eat." She set out the dates and sardines. Pressed close against her legs, he began to eat with feline fingers, sucking all the sugar from the fruit and all the oil from the fish, finishing everything she dropped before him.

When he had eaten his fill, he said, "Seven thousand C.F.A." Without waiting for a response, he tossed her pack across his narrow back and began zigzagging up the side of the cliff. She faced the first boulder he had mounted, fingering the smooth surface for a grip. Then she jumped, catching the top of the rock with her hands, scraping her knees and elbows as she lugged herself over the edge. From a perch far above her head he looked down and said in heavily accented English, "What is your problem?"

He told her to remove the hiking boots and hang them around her neck. As they climbed, the soft pink soles of her feet became familiar with the wrinkled face of the rock, and she moved more swiftly, but no matter how quickly she climbed, Jaraffe skimmed ahead of her. His bronze legs disappeared against the rock, and his blue shirt melted into the sky. Only his black curls stood out against the horizon, and, when he turned, the flash of his smile. She did not look down.

At last, when the sun was easing down over the mountain, Jaraffe stopped to rest. She handed him her canteen, and he drank half of it. She took two short drinks, hesitated, took a third.

"Where is this Dogon cave?"

"Here."

"Where?" There was nothing around them but rock and, far below, the tiny squiggle of a sand path cutting through a velvet desert. When she climbed around the rock where they were resting, she saw a field cut in furrows as thin as pencil marks, dotted with Dogon farmers.

He rolled over and grabbed her ankles, whispering, "Come back, you fool. The Dogons will see you. We are on sacred ground!"

She edged back against the wall. "Don't grab me," she said, whispering back despite herself. "I am older than you. Respect me."

"The dead are older than you. Respect them."

"Shut up."

"Shut up," he mimicked in English.

She lowered herself into a sitting position, keeping her back to the stone. For the first time it occurred to her that they wouldn't be able to get back down the cliff before nightfall. Her hand played with the cap of the canteen, twisting it back and forth.

"I'm going into the cave," he said. "You may follow me if you so desire. In the case of catastrophe, you are not my responsibility. I'm just informing you. Americans like to know these things beforehand."

"Jaraffe, we have to spend the night up here. You told me we could make the climb in one day."

"Maybe I will find you some beautiful earrings, or some money. But if you are complaining I won't give the present to you. Then I will give it to one of my other girlfriends, or perhaps I'll keep it for myself."

She ignored the girlfriend reference. "We need water," she said.

"I am going on my secret mission." He rolled his eyes in cool mystery. "Are you coming?"

THE entrance to the cave was blocked by a boulder. "Otherwise," Jaraffe explained, "the hyenas would eat the corpses." They stood on either side of it and rolled it away. Jaraffe asked for Darren's flashlight, peering over her shoulder as she dug in her pack for it. He switched it on, dropped to his hands and knees, and crawled behind a scraggly bush, and, after a second, Darren knelt down. She followed the pink soles of his feet into the tunnel, slapping her hands over the thin edge of light that moved behind him. She could smell something rancid, like a rotting steak. Jaraffe began to hum. The hum reverberated in the narrow shaft, sounding in her bones as she and he wound down into the belly of the mountain. Then they turned the last corner, and Jaraffe stood up and moved the circle of light around the room.

It was filled with human skeletons. They were stacked from the floor to the ceiling. Some of them were seated along the walls, behind urns full of beads and trinkets. The flashlight threw quivering strips of light into the stark eyeholes, the gaping jaws, and the thick spaces between the yellow ribs. They stank.

Jaraffe sang. It was a low, mournful tune, full of strange notes and nonsensical words. They stood beside a pile of corpses. The bottom of the heap was nothing but dust, and the human bones seemed to rise out of this, a shoulder pushing up, a jaw jutting out, a broken hand digging back down into the powder. In the middle of the stack the skeletons were complete, and at the top, near the ceiling, scraps of faded *pagnes* hung off the bones. It was as though the corpses on top had grown out of the dead lying beneath them. It was as though Darren and Jaraffe, panting and sweating, had rolled off the top of the heap, obscenely alive.

Jaraffe slid behind the pile, leaving her in darkness. She heard him rattling among the bones, but she did not follow. Once, his light shot across the room, illuminating a skeleton sitting cross-legged against the wall, holding an urn between its knees. Inside the urn, besides beads and a few C.F.A. coins, there was a rusted can opener. She felt despair. What hand was cruel enough to create a human being, a sad fool who could see his end, and then smash him to dust? The light was dimming. "Jaraffe, don't burn out the batteries," she called softly, and the sound of her voice frightened her.

"*Oui, j'arrive!*" He rummaged noisily in the pile of skeletons, shaking the fingers on the hands, the toes on the feet, turning the heads this way and that. His hum was high, loud, and uncertain. At last he scurried back to her. "Come! Hurry!" He dropped down on all fours and sped out of the cavern and up the shaft. Darren followed, knocking her head against the ceiling, scraping her knees, senseless to the pain.

OUTSIDE, the sun fell in graceful surrender to the night, throwing out its last miracles, cloaking the jagged edge of the horizon in shadow. Birds sang unearthly notes, brazenly breaking the day's long silence. In the dying sun, Jaraffe's bare arms and legs turned gold, and as he stood on the ledge, holding the skeleton of a human hand like a scepter over the Dogon farmers in the fields below, he looked like a god. A few farmers still bent over their short, primitive hoes, but most of them had thrown the shafts over their shoulders and were walking toward the mountain. Their villages were built so cleverly into the sides of the cliffs that one could walk right by them and never spot a human dwelling. Like the birds, the farmers had begun to sing out to each other.

"Forgive me for calling you a liar this morning," Darren said. "I'm glad that you're my guide." Jaraffe turned his head to hide the frank pleasure on his face.

"This is the cave where we will sleep tonight," he said, motioning to an overhanging rock. "I hope it pleases you."

She crawled inside. The ceiling was so low that she couldn't stand up, but the floor was large enough for the two of

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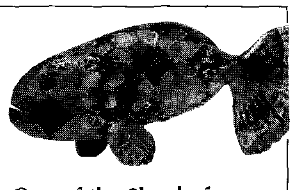

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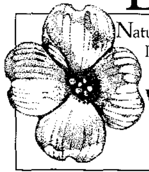

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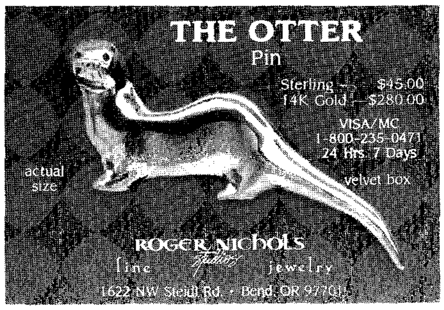

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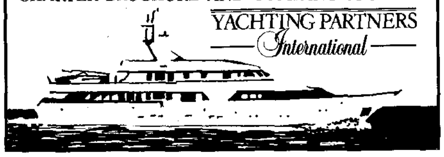

them to stretch out when they slept. A hollow in the back wall led to other passages that were too dark to see.

"Jaraffe," she called, stepping out onto the ledge, "I think there are too many openings; something could come . . ." She stopped. He had opened her pack. The camera hung around his neck, and he was rubbing a stick of deodorant along his face. His nostrils flared delicately as he sniffed the scent.

She snatched the deodorant out of his hand. "You do not ever open my pack without my permission!"

He hunched his shoulders together and then lifted his chin. "I don't care. Mosquitoes don't bite Africans when they can bite white ladies."

"What?" She burst into laughter. "That's not mosquito repellent. That's deodorant; it goes under your arms. Oh, never mind." She pulled the camera off his neck and tried to take his picture, but he turned his back to her.

"You don't have anything good to eat in your pack," he said, grumbling. "The other Americans had chocolate, and macaroni-and-cheese. You don't even have a stove."

"You aren't required to eat with me." As she knelt beside him, putting the items back into the pack, she smelled the deodorant on his face and chuckled. "I'm sorry, Jaraffe. It's just that it's funny to Americans."

With her army knife, he cut a string from her roll of twine and tied the skeleton hand around his neck. "The other Americans had Kool-Aid as well. Grape." He held up the fruit she had bought in the market and looked at it with disgust before he cut off the top. "Beggar's food," he snorted, sliding two fingers inside the hard shell and popping a fleshy seed into his mouth. "Food for lepers."

"Where's the water?"

"Africans don't need water."

"Well, Americans do." She turned up the canteen he had nearly emptied.

"Americans carry extra batteries," he said. She tried to turn the flashlight on; the batteries were dead. He smiled and handed her the fruit. The sweet and sour seeds puckered her lips and burned her stomach, but the juice soothed her thirst. He laughed at her grimaces.

"Are you cold?" she asked.

"Africans don't get cold."

She tossed a sweater at his head and carried her own warm clothes toward the cave to change. When she looked back, he was smelling the sweater, running his fingers over the cashmere and sliding it along his cheek. Inside the cave, something rustled. Wind? She couldn't make herself crawl inside. With her back turned to Jaraffe, she changed her clothes and returned to sit beside him.

Black curls fell across his forehead, and his eyes gleamed yellow in the falling darkness. The sweater swallowed him. The cuffs flapped below his hands as he crossed his arms and commented, "Your body is very beautiful, but I find your derrière too small."

"Shut up, Jaraffe."

"I see that you are frightened to go in our cave, or perhaps you have fallen in love with me."

The muscles in her back tensed. "You? You are a child." His face stiffened in humiliation. He began to hum.

The stars came out in rapid succession, crowding the huge black sky until they nearly touched each other. She lay on her back looking up for Sirius, the great star of the Dogons.

When she gazed too long at the sky, she lost all sense of direction and had to press her hands flat against the cold, solid rock. Behind her the gaping mouth of the cave waited, and she dreaded it. The boy seemed a stranger to her now, chanting his lonely, foreign hymns, accompanying the one bird that remained awake. The birdcall was like nothing she had ever heard. It wasn't a screech or a caw or the notes of a song but something chilling and abrupt, like the scream of a woman.

"Jaraffe, what is that bird?"

"There is no bird."

"Yes, listen. It screams like a woman." It screamed then, louder than before. "That one."

"That's a hyena."

"Where is the hyena?"

"It's here." The scream came again, and her heart pounded. "She smells your fear," he added reproachfully.

"Aren't you afraid?"

"I am the son of a magician, do you forget so quickly? I went into the sacred Dogon grave and took my talisman." He rattled the fingers on the skeleton hand. "The hyena is afraid of me."

"What happens if the hyena comes into the cave while we are sleeping?"

She heard him yawn. A bank of clouds rolled across the sky, and the stars blinked out, one by one, like the lights going off in a house.

"You aren't earning your keep as a guide," she said.

"Ha! Ha, ha. I am a child, remember? I am a child when Madame decides that I am to be a child. Now Madame is afraid and needs a man. Am I to be a man now?"

He reached for her breast, laughing when she knocked his hand away. "A child, then. Well, the child is going to bed. Sweet dreams, Madame." He moved away.

She lay on her back looking up at the sky until the last star blinked out. Then it was terribly dark, and cold. Every sound—the rustle of weeds, the roll of gravel, the rasping of her own breath—was magnified until her nerves were taut with fear. She saw the empty stares of the skeletons. When the hyena screamed again, she jumped up and ran to the mouth of the cave.

"Jaraffe?" He did not answer. She leaned down and pushed her head through the opening, blinking in the darkness. "I'm not coming in until you answer me." Suddenly, something swished behind her. With a thud, the animal landed on her back. She screamed.

"Waa!" Jaraffe cried, rolling off her back, doubled over in laughter. He leaped about her, pulling at his hair, rolling his eyes, crying out in sharp female wails. "Waa!" he cried. "Oh, oh, help me! Where is my big, strong, handsome guide?"

With her heart still knocking in her chest, she swung her fist at him, but he ducked it like a boxer. "Damn you!" she yelled. He shrieked—a scared, mean laugh. She lunged for him and caught hold of his skinny arm, but he slipped out of her grasp. For a moment they stood facing each other in the dark, panting, and then she hissed, "I despise you." She began to sob in broken screams that scraped her throat raw, a horrible, lonely sound. She covered her mouth, choking in the effort to stop the noise. She felt his presence somewhere in front of her, small and no longer fierce, and she crawled into the cave. She made a thin pallet from the rest of the clothes in her pack and lay down, first on her back, then on her stomach. Then she rolled over on her back again. Each lump in the rock made a distinct stab into her flesh. She began to wonder about Jaraffe, and to want him with her, if only to slap him.

A few minutes later, he scooted into the cave. "And where is my bed?" he demanded. She remained silent. "You are angry with me." He stretched out beside her on the hard floor and pushed her arm. "Say something, Darren, my dear friend Darren." When she rolled away from him, he patted her head as if she were a baby. "You were crying, and I did not help you. Now I have scared you. You are so good to me, giving me food and water and this sweater. I do not even like grape Kool-Aid and macaroni-and-cheese and chocolate—well, maybe chocolate. I like the sweater; it keeps me warm and smells very nice." He gave a loud, appreciative sniff.

"You annoy me."

"This is true. I am annoying and rude and bad. I am ugly." He waited for her to contradict this last statement, and when she did not he continued. "Many people share your opinion. It is all true." He let his voice become pitiful. "Surely I will burn in hell. Or Allah will find some way to punish me, so that I never forget my sins against you and am always ashamed."

Despite herself, she spoke. "When I first met you, last night, I thought, Here is a boy different from all the other little bandits in Africa. Here is a serious boy. Now I see that I was mistaken. You are just like all the other scoundrels in the street."

"My remorse is more enormous than the sky."

"You are not sincere."

"This is true. I am sorry. Will you forgive me?"

She tossed him the roll of pants and shirts that had been her pillow and closed her eyes. Noisily, he made his bed beside her and went on with his apology. His voice purred against the cold, black walls. He spoke nonsense. At last, he lay down against her back, throwing an arm around her neck and sticking his cold feet between her calves.

"I don't like that, Jaraffe. Stop it."

"I don't have any socks. My feet are cold."

"You can take some socks out of my pack." She listened as he rummaged through her things, mumbling to himself in various tongues, and then she felt him once again press his small, hard body against her back. When his arm circled her neck, the skeleton hand, still tied around his neck, cut between her shoulder blades. "You will take me with you back to America, and I will go to medical

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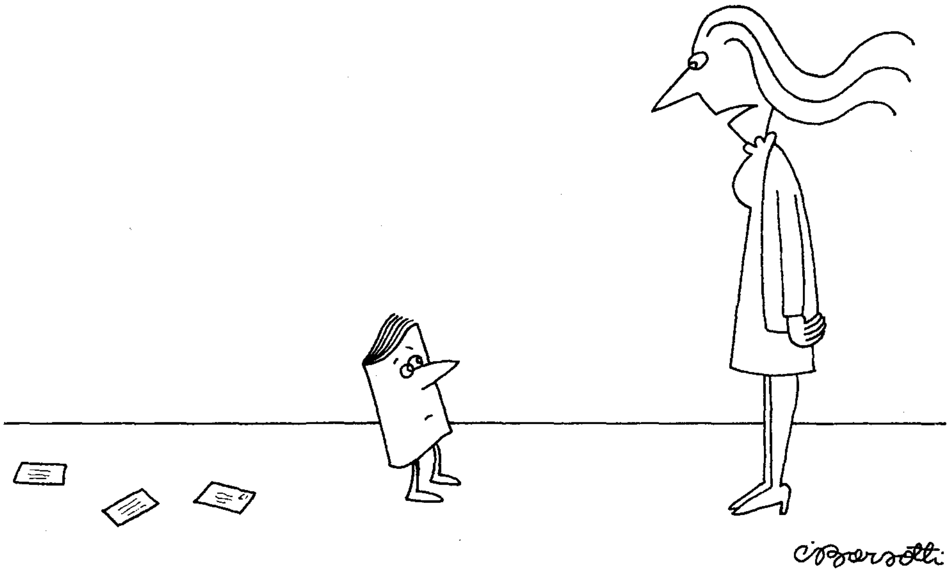


"You know very well what subscription forms."

school and become a great surgeon. . . ." he murmured sleepily in her ear. "We will get married . . . and have a big house in Dallas, Texas."

She fell into light sleep nettled with nightmares, and awoke strangling in his skinny arms, her face locked against his cheek. His breath shot out in hard, quick bursts, and his heart, racing against her own, knocked on her chest. Above them, the hyena's scream tangled with the anguished shrieking of another animal. The beasts thrashed and rolled on the roof of the cave, knocking pebbles and clumps of dirt from its ceiling. Jaraffe's arms gripped her like thin iron rods. His heart was banging so hard in his chest that she thought he would explode. She hugged the clinging boy tighter against her, hiding her face in his hair, her mind clamped tight on the will to live. For a long time, they lay in their rigid embrace, listening to the hyena chew its shrieking victim. The boy's glowing yellow eyes made the only light in the cave.

When Darren awoke, Jaraffe was gone. He had taken her camera and her hat with him. The leather purse hanging around her neck was flat and empty. Even her passport was gone. "Bastard!" she screamed out over the desert. "Thief!" She threw a rock over the side of the cliff, and then another, screaming as tears ran down her cheeks. Jaraffe had robbed her. She didn't want to climb back down into the world, not ever, but Jaraffe had drunk all of her water, and her tongue was swollen with thirst. She shouldered the pack and began to back slowly down the cliff.

By nightfall Darren was back at the Grand Hôtel de Mali. Jaraffe's mother stood in the doorway of the bar, watching her stagger, hatless, dirty, ragged, across the courtyard. Silently, the hotelkeeper went behind the bar and handed Darren a beer. Then, without moving a muscle on her face, she wet a towel, and, leaning forward, roughly scrubbed Darren's face and hands. Darren stood still, in shock; then she sat down at the table and ate the plate of macaroni and tough, greasy meat the woman brought to her. When she pushed her plate back she saw the passport under it. "They're all cunning," she said softly, and pushed the small blue book into her bra. Then she waited for Jaraffe. While she waited she drank beer, and each time she took a fresh bottle of Gazelle from Jaraffe's mother, she felt a new surge of power. I'll kill him, she thought.

Around ten o'clock Jaraffe sauntered into the bar, wearing a new white suit and a shirt the color of lemons. Darren's brown felt hat was tilted at a rakish angle on his head. A cigarette dangled from his lips. After a brief moment when it looked as though he might run back out the door, he flashed his best grin and said, "Darren, *ma chérie*, at last I find you, oh, at last!" She waited. She let him swagger to her. As he bent down to touch his lips to her cheek in the French manner, she smelled alcohol and cheap perfume. He was saying, "Why did you worry me like this? I thought you were lost forever," and leaning forward to kiss her other cheek when she grabbed his neck. She pressed her fingers into the soft skin, digging them between the tendons, and shook him until her hat fell off his head. His strangled cries filled the room. "Mama!" he yelled. "Help me!"

His mother came and stood silently before them. "Help!" cried Jaraffe, and the gendarme ran out from the back room buckling his pants. Then the doorway filled with whores and men, shouting and pushing against each other to get into the room.

"He stole my money!" Darren yelled.

"I did not. This woman hired me to be her guide. I took her into the cliffs, as she asked me to, and then she paid me and told me to go. I gave the money to my mother, who needs it to take care of my poor father."

The crowd pressed noisily into the room and around Darren. One of the whores pushed her painted face down close and whispered, "He's a thief, that one." Darren felt the prostitute's long nails resting briefly on her arm. Jaraffe's mother stared straight at the wall.

The gendarme was looking into Darren's eyes. "I will help you," he said. He laid his broad hand on her shoulder. "Have confidence in me." His hand moved slowly upward until his fingers rested in her hair. She shook it off wearily. "You are an educated woman, eh? You know many things, some languages? You know perhaps how to drive a car? You know how to work a computer? Many, many things live in this head." He rolled his hand over her head as if it were a coconut. "Your head is no good here, eh?" He picked the hat off the floor and pushed it gently down over her ears, as if to stop her from thinking, and then snapped his fingers at Jaraffe's mother. The woman brought two beers; then, from inside her bra, she took a roll of soft bills and laid them silently before Darren. Jaraffe swaggered over and set down her camera. Darren waited a moment to see if the gendarme meant to demand her permit. The man grinned at her, then turned away and drank up, and she stuffed the camera into her bag.

In the morning, she took a jitney back to Bamako, and all along the way young boys begged to guide her. ♦

THE CHANGING FACE OF EUROPE

◆

EUROPE IS IN THE THROES OF A POLITICAL, COMMERCIAL, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF GREAT MAGNITUDE.

◆

While more Americans are doing business in Europe than ever before, most of them haven't really seen the continent for years. They notice that the taxi drivers speak a different language and accept a more colorful currency, but otherwise they might as well be in Duluth or Chicago as in Frankfort or Bologna. When they travel primarily for pleasure they may have passports and luggage embellished with the colorful emblems of Thailand or Turkestan but they have no experience of the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace or the sunrise over the Alps. "Europe will always be there," they proclaim, then head for Kenya to see the wildebeest migration before the great herds disappear. Indeed, many first-time travellers, as well as these more sophisticated voyagers, tend to take Europe for granted—which is a big mistake. For today the Old World is the New World in the making.

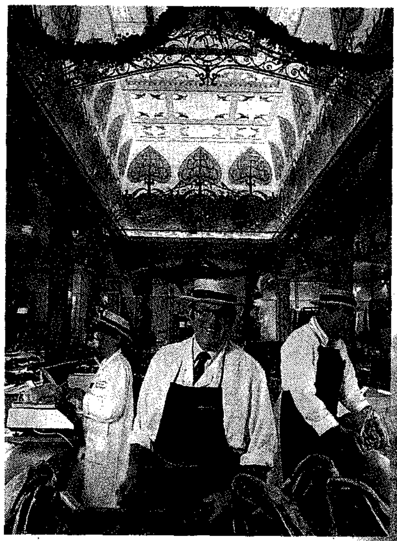
James Strachen

John Lamb

Alain Le Garsmeur

Calligraphy by Peggy Wallace. All photographs/Tony Stone Images.

Not everyone in London



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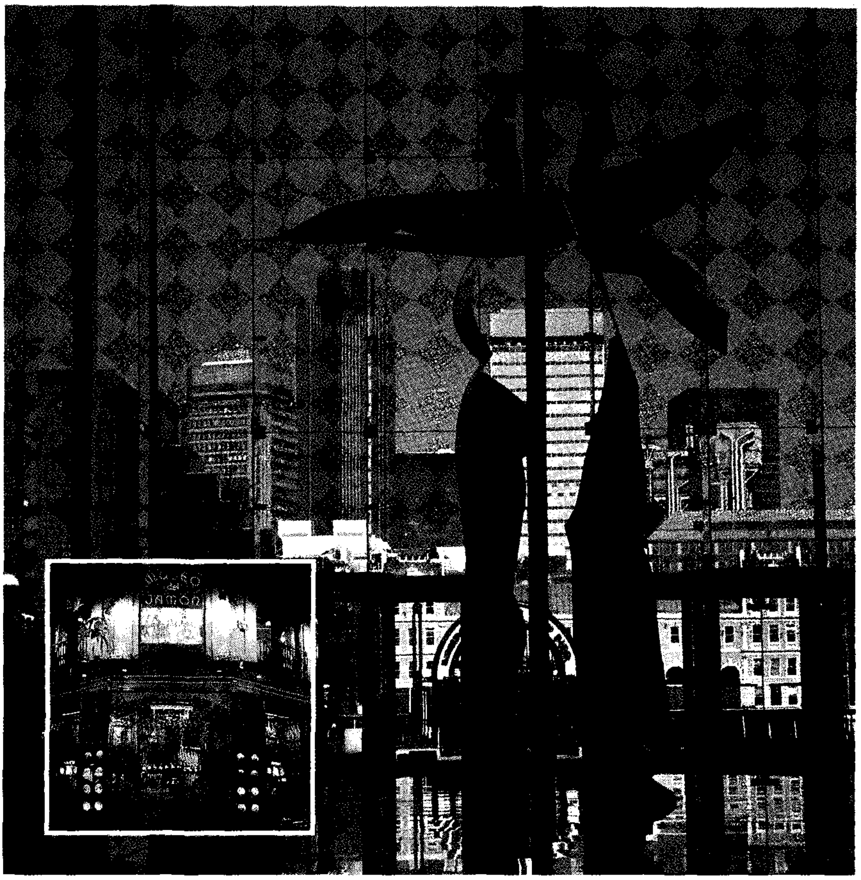

Pete Seaward

Jon Bradley

London's Docklands is an example of Britain's modern side. Inset: *In Spain, the city of Madrid lights up at night.*

BRITAIN AND IRELAND

To stroll along Canterbury's Pilgrim's Way, to stand beneath the magnificent spires of Winchester's great cathedral, or to gaze in wonder at the timeless monuments of Stonehenge is to feel the resonance of hundreds of years of British history. The past is alive throughout the United Kingdom—on Lindisfarne's Holy Isle, at the Viking Centre in York, in the great houses of Scotland, the castles of Wales, the thatched roofs of Stratford-on-Avon. But from the right vantage point—the top of London's National Westminster Building or the city's Commercial Union Building, or from a comfortable water taxi which cruises the Thames between Chelsea Harbor and Greenwich—you can see the future too. Don't miss the very contemporary waterside complex known as the Docklands, the new financial center on Canary Wharf's Isle of Dogs, and the Design Museum on Butler's Wharf. Britain's newest marvel, an underwater tunnel linking it with France, is more than halfway completed; when the Chunnel opens, in late 1993 or early 1994, you'll be able to reach all of Europe, by motorcar, directly from the United Kingdom.

Meanwhile, you can ferry over to Ireland, whose emerald hills boast castles, stone walls, and lazy country lanes and whose air tells of the ever-present freshness of the radiant sea. European Community membership has given Dublin a new lease on life, and the recent and continuing influx of young people from the surrounding countryside is also making its mark on the culture, cuisine, and nightlife of the Emerald Isle's biggest city.

◆

VISITORS TO BRITAIN FEEL THE RESONANCE OF HUNDREDS OF YEARS OF HISTORY. THEY ALSO GET A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE.

◆

SPAIN

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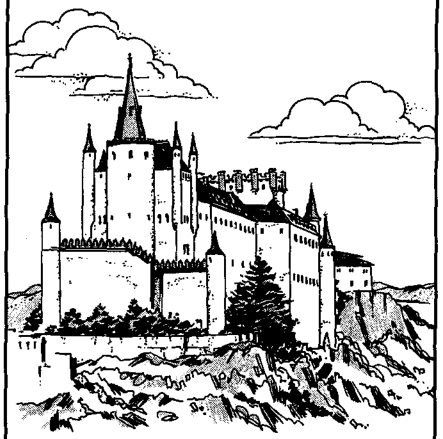

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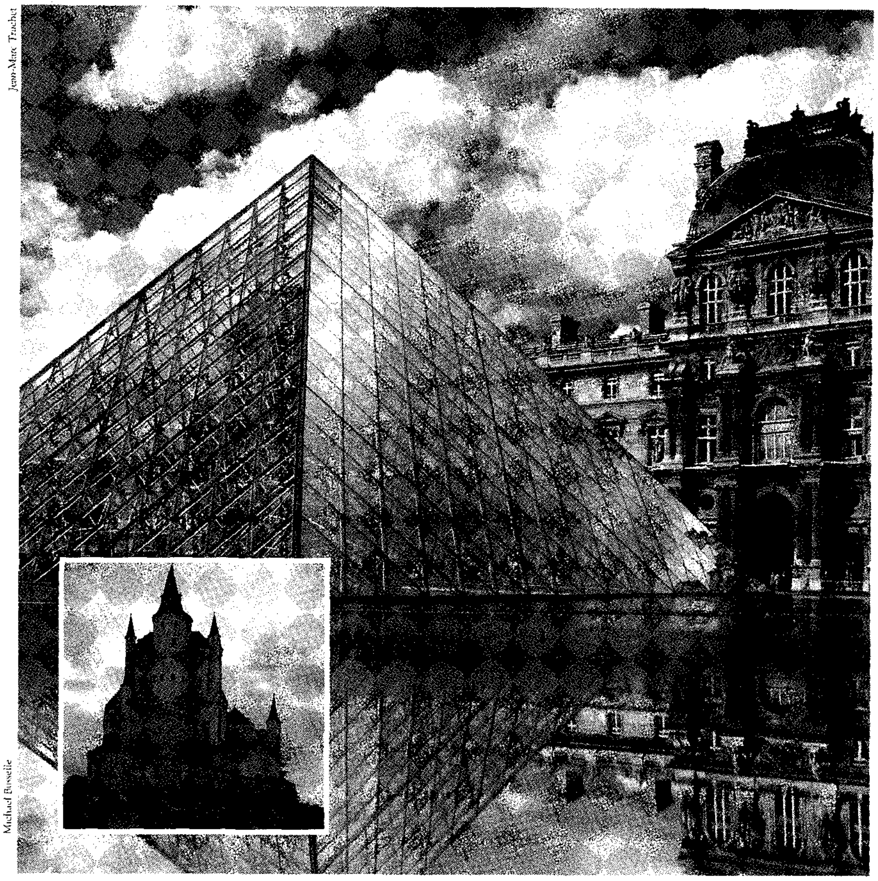

Jean-Marc Truchet

Michael Busselle

In France, the old and the new are represented at the Louvre. Inset:*The Alcazar in Segovia, Spain.*

stored the country to the glory and splendor of centuries ago. Some say the reinvigoration of the country is due to the benefits of Common Market membership; culture watchers date the renaissance from the return of Picasso's famed *Guernica* to the country of his birth. Whatever the reason, Spain's oldest treasures—its glorious palaces, gardens, castles, monuments, and plazas, as well as its newest assets—gleam like jewels, especially in the cities.

Madrid is a nonstop metropolis where a traveller can always find up-to-the-minute music, theatre, film, food, and fashion—in the elegant Plaza Mayor (one of the great public squares in Europe); in the raucous bars, tascas, and terrazas north of the Gran Via in the neighborhoods of Chueca and Malasana; at the raffish indoor/outdoor street-market of the Rastro; or at the upscale shops and avant-garde jazz and rock clubs of Salamanca and the countless seafood and tapas restaurants around the historic Puerta del Sol.

An amazing and amusing blend of Gothic, Art Nouveau, and post-modern architecture attracts visitors to the vibrant, cosmopolitan and very Mediterranean city of Barcelona. Head straight for the true heart of the city—Las Ramblas, a bustling thoroughfare lined with stalls, cafés, theatres, and shops. On a clear day the view merits a climb to the top of Montjuïch, which offers five museums, an amusement park, the Olympic arena, and a splendid eighteenth-century citadel. If your desire is stronger than your legs, you can take the cable car to the summit instead.

FRANCE

The oldest "Old Masters" in France, whose works are etched on the walls of paleolithic caves in Lascaux and the Dordogne, date back more than ten thousand years. The works of more recent artists hang in the newest Paris museum transformations—in the Musee d'Orsay and beneath the glass pyramid of I. M. Pei's striking addition to the Louvre. On the site of the ancient market Les Halles, in the newly refurbished Marais, are the Beaubourg Center, the Picasso Museum, and the Jacques Cousteau Museum, all three of which exemplify the French tradition of making the old new again. In art and architecture, as well as in couture, culture, gastronomy, and design, the French style of reinventing the past is always fresh—"nouvelle" in France is a way of life.

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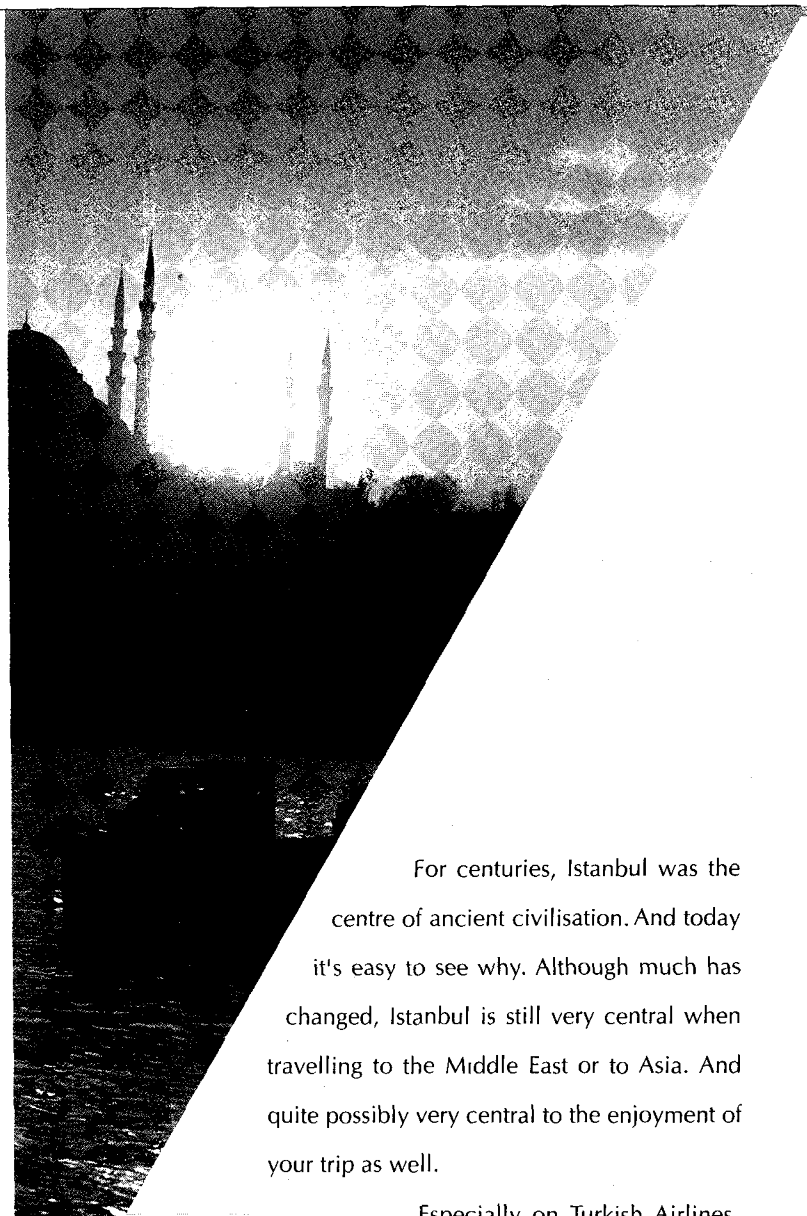

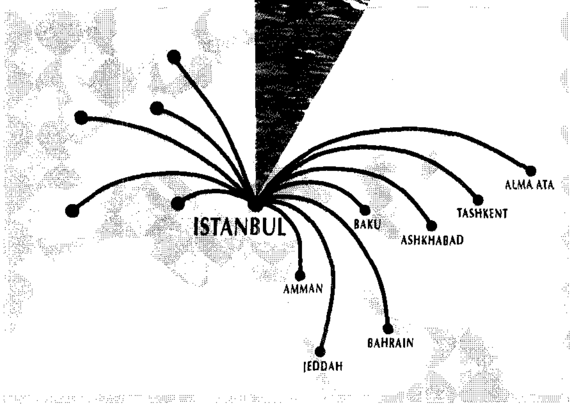

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"La Monstrua" by Juan Carreño De Miranda. El Prado Museum.

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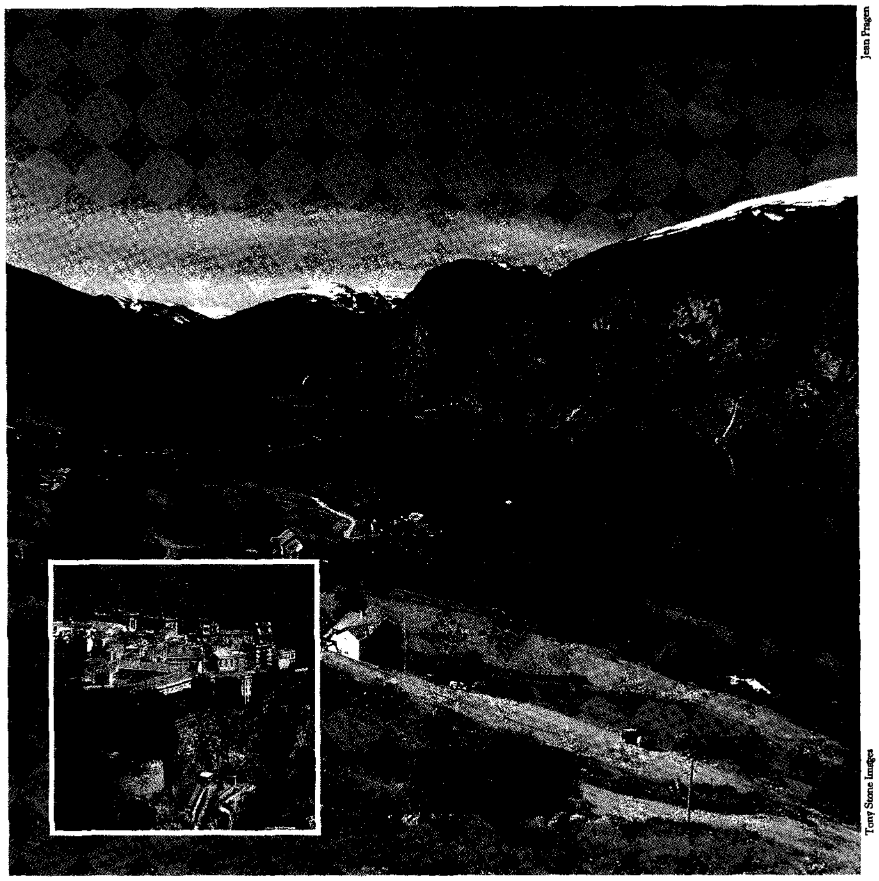
Jean Pragen

Tony Stone Images

Magnificent scenery is one of the things that hasn't changed in Europe. Inset: *An aerial view of Monaco shows its splendor.*

MONACO

The distance between Monaco's magnificent attractions are measured in footsteps. In 1993, the Principality's celebrated nightlife provides the backdrop for the "Year of the Sports," the explosive wonders of the International Fireworks Festival, and electrifying displays of art. The Monte Carlo Biennial of Sculpture will feature more than thirty massive works of twentieth-century sculpture, and the Ballets de Monte Carlo will be performing out-of-doors, on the terrace of the Casino which overlooks the Mediterranean Sea.

SCANDINAVIA

Rugged fjords with crystalline waters and glacial mountain peaks. A Santa Claus village in an Arctic wilderness. Cosmopolitan cities dotted with canals, parks, gardens, and museums. Royalty browsing, snacking, shopping, and jogging right next to ordinary citizens. Reindeer safaris, a famous mermaid, Gothic, medieval, and modern architecture. Smorgasbords, aquavit, and sardines. In Scandinavia, the traveller gets all this, and on a human scale that enhances the considerable pleasures of the region's daily life.

Helsinki's Esplanade, Copenhagen's Stroget, and Stockholm's Stortoget showcase the new in crafts, couture, and design. The twenty-acre Tivoli Gardens is lively with the laughter of Copenhagen's children by day, but on long summer nights the music, entertainment, and elegant cuisine attract a sophisticated adult crowd. Kansen, on Stockholm's Djurgarden Island, is a living museum where artisans work in the traditional modes of weaving and silversmithing; also on the island are a zoo that houses Nordic animals, and Grona Lund, a small amusement park that hosts rock concerts and harlequin theatre performances. Beautiful, dramatically sited Oslo, gateway to Norway's western fjords, has fine museums—the Vigeland Sculpture Park, the Munch Museum, the National Gallery, the Viking Ship and Kon Tiki Museums.

◆

IN 1993, THE TINY PRINCIPALITY OF MONACO PROVIDES THE BACKDROP FOR A FULL CALENDAR OF EVENTS.

◆

Cave paintings

Go to Altamira and visit a cave where the paintings of a bison hunt date to 16,000 B.C.

Romanesque Art

Santiago de Compostela, the site of Christian pilgrimages for 1,000 years, boasts Romanesque architecture dating from the 11th century. In 1993, Spain celebrates its long history in the Year of Santiago.

Velázquez

The Prado in Madrid is home to the world's largest collection of Velázquez, as well as a myriad of Old Masters such as Goya, Zurbarán and El Greco.

Villahermosa Palace

View the extraordinary 830-piece collection of Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza, considered one of the most valuable private art collections in the world.

Picasso

The Picasso Museum in Barcelona is in the city's Gothic Quarter—after viewing all the art, walk in the footsteps of Christopher Columbus.

Miró

Celebrate the 100th anniversary of Miró's birth with exhibitions in Barcelona and Mallorca. Then check out the Miró Museum in Barcelona.

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Left: *Germany's Neuschwanstein Castle;* Right: *Austria's Salzburg is home to Europe's oldest music festival.*

BENELUX COUNTRIES

If you could visit only one country in Europe, you could do no better than Luxembourg, which has a little of everything—castles, Alps, vineyards, spas, and more. If you had only one city to choose from, Brussels would be a marvelous choice, for its extraordinary museums, eclectic mixture of the traditional and modern, and new prominence as capital of the European Community. Don't miss a tour of the ornate, baroque guild-houses, a performance at the Toone VII Theatre Museum, and a visit to the superb museums in the uppertown, especially the Musée d'Art Moderne.

The best way for travellers to see the Netherlands is by boat. In Amsterdam the Museum Boat that plies the canals stops at five docks, which altogether take you to twenty superb museums. Day trips in water taxis around the Zuider Zee put you in easy reach of the "costume villages" and garden towns: go to Lisse for the tulips, Edam for the cheese, Delft for the pottery, and Leiden for the country's most astonishing van Goghs.

◆

AS EXTRAORDINARY AS GREECE'S RUINS ARE, THE ENTHUSIASTIC GREEKS ARE THE BEST REASON TO LINGER.

◆

GERMANY

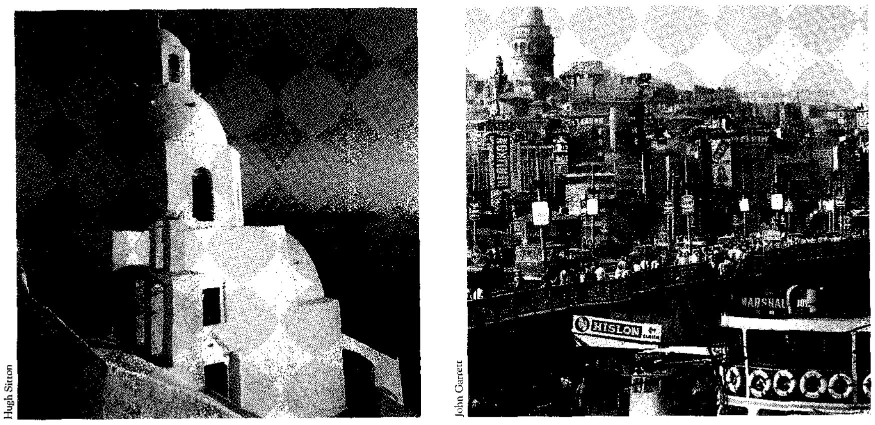
With the same skill and determination that rebuilt a nation from the rubble of World War II, Germany today is applying itself to the task of accommodating the millions of immigrants who have flooded the country since the collapse of Communism, especially in the cities of Berlin, Munich, Cologne, Bonn, and Frankfort. But in the heartland—along the banks of the Rhine, in medieval towns on the Romantic Road, in Bavarian villages in the Tyrol—the architecture, music, art, food, wine, and folk traditions that have defined German culture for centuries seem hardly touched by the political and social tumult of the post-Wall world. You can explore the Rhine by train, car, boat, or barge, breaking up its 820 miles into scenic chunks encompassing the castles of kings, princes, and feudal robber barons; the legend-steeped rock of Lorelei and the Rhine maidens; the baroque palaces and walled medieval cities of the Romantic Road.

AUSTRIA

The air in Austria is redolent with the crisp, piney fragrance of the forests, the bracing cold of the mountains, the sweet aromas of sacher torte and strudel, the lilting strains of Strauss and the romantic melodies of Mozart. Come to Salzburg for the oldest and best-known of the European music festivals, the five-week Mozart summer extravaganza. Head for the Tyrol pour le sport: Innsbruck is famous for its Olympic Village and excellent ski facilities. For city splendor, Vienna's baroque and imperial glories are still very much in evidence. But the city's new prominence as a conference center and the influx of immigrants from the east have done much to make Vienna a city that is very much in the present too.

SWITZERLAND

Switzerland's longstanding political neutrality, low tax rates, and efficient banking structure have been attracting new


Hugh Sitton

John Garrett

Left: *Whitewashed buildings dot the island of Santorini;* Right: *Istanbul's Galata Bridge.*

residents for years. For travellers though, the scenery comes first, and with good reason—it is the most dramatically beautiful in all Europe, from the snowcapped Alps, rolling meadows, and flower-studded, terraced vineyards to the towering forests and fertile lake and river valleys. Switzerland was "multicultural" long before that became a buzzword of the nineties. At least four distinct cultures coexist peacefully in this country, and their histories are all represented at the fifty-acre, open-air Museum Ballenberg in Brienz, near Interlaken.

ITALY

Cellular phones ring in the nave of an ancient cathedral. A high-performance sports car yields to a donkey cart on a narrow Tuscan lane. Old women in shapeless black dresses gaze into the window of a Milanese boutique. A dizzying array of the eternal and the temporal, from the Tyrolean Alps at the top of the "boot" to its Sicilian "toe," Italy is a country rich in paradoxes. The art and culture of a nation of explorers and conquerors, poets and princes flourishes in the great treasure-houses of Florence and Venice, in lively, boisterous Naples, and fashionable, frenetic Milan. But all roads lead eventually to Rome, which remains one of Europe's most brilliant, seductive, and extravagant cities.

GREECE

Legend has it that the gods who descended from Mt. Olympus created the special light that bathes Greece in a lemony glow. That same light has illuminated over four millennia of human history. But as awesome and extraordinary as are its ruins, antiquities and monuments, the lusty, vigorous, enthusiastic Greeks themselves are the best reason to linger in the cities or the countryside. The pleasure the Greeks take in music, food, and wine, their appreciation for both classical and experimental theatre, low comedy and high tragedy, is as old as the temples of Delphi.

Athens is a bustling, boisterous, sophisticated city. Explore it from the Parthenon to the Plaka, from Kolonaki Square's elegant shops to the flea markets of Monastiraki; then head southeast to Cape Sounion to watch the sun set over the Doric ruins of Poseidon's temple. Take a ferry, hydrofoil, motor-sailer, or traditional caique to the Aegean islands. Don't miss Rhodes, Mykonos, and Delos—and don't fail to sample the excellent local retsina distilled from the pine trees of Aegina.

TURKEY

There is no sight in all Europe to compare to Istanbul's skyline. The exotic jumble of towers, turrets, minarets, and mosques is as breathtaking as the Bogazici, the most famous of the two bridges that link Asia with Europe and give this ancient city the flavor of both the Orient and the West. Another landmark, the Golden Horn, separates the old city of Byzantium from Beyoglu, or Galata, the chief business section of Istanbul. Most of the main sightseeing attractions in Istanbul, like Topkapi Palace and the sixteenth-century Suleymaniye Mosque, are in the European section. Outside Istanbul and Ankara, Turkey's westernized capital city, the ancient sites of Troy, Ephesus, and Aphrodisias are popular with tourists, especially archeology buffs; resort-bound travellers head for the Aegean coast towns of Cesme, Marmaris, and Bodrum.

Jane Adams is a Seattle-based travel writer. She is currently working on her book, *I'm Still Your Mother,* which will be published by Delacorte.

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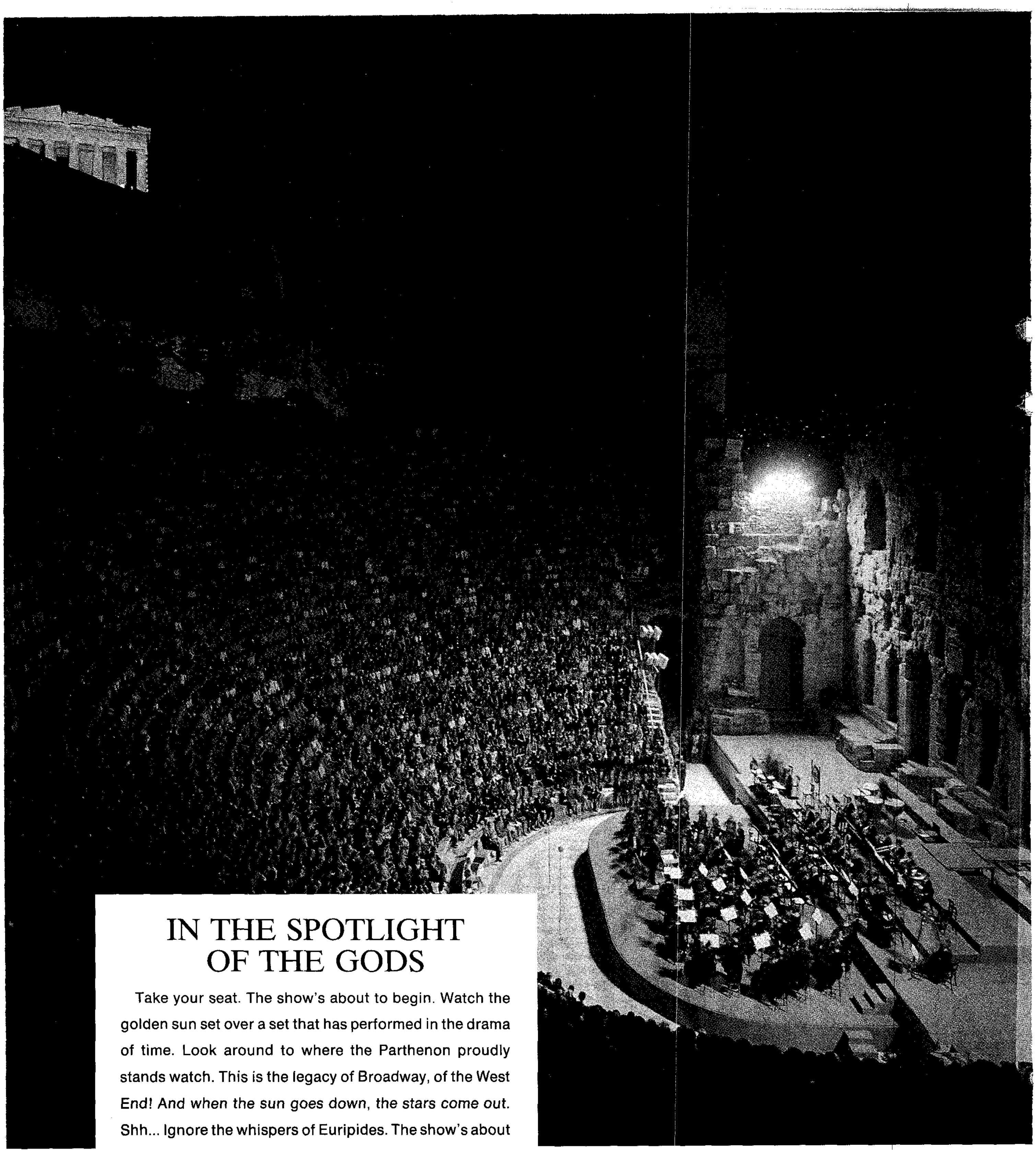

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THE CRITICS

JAZZ

FIRST LADY OF SONG

BY WHITNEY BALLIETT

FOR a time, early in their lives, Ella Fitzgerald, the most celebrated of female American popular singers, and Billie Holiday, the most celebrated of female American jazz singers, seemed like kissing cousins. Both were born poor and black into flimsy, fatherless families—Fitzgerald in Newport News, Virginia, on April 25, 1918, and Holiday in Philadelphia, on April 7, 1915. By 1930, they had moved to New York, Ella to just beyond the city limits, in Yonkers, and Billie to Manhattan. Both sang in their early teens, or before, but they were already facing in opposite directions. Ella had fallen under the sway of the white singers Connee Boswell and Dolly Dawn, while Billie had listened to Bessie Smith and Louis Armstrong. Ella, taking her singing for granted, watched the scandalous eccentric dancer Snake Hips Tucker and decided she wanted to be a dancer. When she was fifteen or sixteen, she entered an amateur contest at the Apollo Theatre as a dancer, but she lost her nerve at the last moment and instead sang the only two songs she knew—"Judy" and "The Object of My Affection." She won, entered other contests, and, after a brief zigzag time, was hired as a singer by the drummer Chick Webb, who became her protector and guardian. (Amateur contests were a kind of Depression escape hatch. Many urban theatres held amateur nights once a week, and there were weekly amateur contests on the radio.) On June 12, 1935, Ella made her recording début with Webb's band on the Decca label, singing "I'll Chase the Blues Away" and "Love and Kisses." She was seventeen years old.

Ella Fitzgerald's seventy-fifth birthday is honored by the reissue on CD of some of the finest recordings of her long career.

Although Fitzgerald's extraordinarily resilient voice began to show wear in the mid-eighties, she gave a concert in New York as recently as last year, and she has had the longest career of any American popular singer. Her career comes in three parts. The Webb years lasted until 1941. (She took over the band after Webb's death, in 1939.) From 1941 to 1955, she worked as a single, recording helter-skelter with everyone from the Ink Spots to Louis Jordan ("Stone Cold Dead in the Market"), Louis Armstrong, Bob Haggart ("Oh, Lady Be Good"), and Ellis Larkins. (She and Larkins, a masterly accompanist, made a ten-inch duo LP of Gershwin songs in the early fifties which is used in music schools as an example of how to sing a ballad.) Then, in 1956, she was taken over permanently by the entrepreneur and recording executive Norman Granz. Her career had pretty much come to a stop, and Granz, realizing that her abilities as a singer of classic American songs had been largely ignored, persuaded her to do her famous "Song Book" albums, and during the next decade she recorded often definitive versions of the work of Irving Berlin, the Gershwins, Harold Arlen, Duke Ellington, Jerome Kern, Johnny Mercer, Cole Porter, and Rodgers and Hart. In many ways, the Ellington "Song Book" is the best, particularly her version of Billy Strayhorn's "Lush Life," which she does ad lib, accompanied only by Oscar Peterson. The song itself is an uneasy combination of delicacy and crudeness, yet she threads her way through easily, using little improvisation and making the music float, a trick Ella at her most relaxed could always do. It's a classic performance. (All the "Song Books" are available on CD on the Verve label, and, in honor of Fitzgerald's seventy-fifth birthday, GRP has put out all her Webb records and a selection from her Decca material of the forties and fifties. Verve has also reissued fifty-one num-

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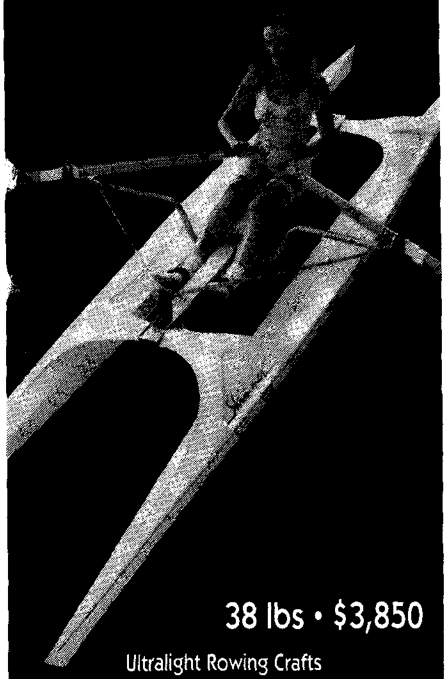
bers from the fifties and sixties, as well as a nifty album she did with a Marty Paich small band in 1958.)

Ella's style was complete by the time she broke up the Webb band. The little-girl voice that bounced along through her early records had grown nearly as much as it ever would, give or take a new low register, a loosening vibrato, and heavier timbres. The fact that her voice never became womanly, that both her slow, cushiony ballads and her leggy up-tempo scat numbers had a preternatural smoothness, made her seem ageless. (Her own life may or may not have been so effortless. She is intensely private, but we do know that she has been married twice, the second time to the bassist Ray Brown; has one child; and now lives in a sumptuous Beverly Hills house.) What had happened in the Webb days was that the drummer had, through the sheer hypnotic power of his playing, unwittingly and permanently shaped her style: she still loves rhythm singing. For that reason, her lyrics, though carefully articulated, convey rhythm, not meaning and emotion. She is, of course, an impeccable singer, and her assimilable, almost square perfectionism has influenced countless other singers, among them Carol Sloane, Doris Day, Rosemary Clooney, Mel Tormé, and Maxine Sullivan, whose style grew directly out of Ella's very first Webb recording.

But Ella, for the life of her, cannot sing the blues. She decorates them, she embellishes them, but she remains on the outside—which brings us back to Billie Holiday, a great blues singer and Ella's best reflector. The directions the two singers would go in became clear early in their careers. In 1938, Ella recorded a mock children's song, "A-Tisket, A-Tasket," and had her first big hit. A year later, Billie made "Strange Fruit," a "Guernica" about lynching, which was the closest thing to a hit *she* ever had. The jazz clarinettist Tony Scott once summed up the two performers this way: "A singer like Ella says, 'My man's left me,' and you think the guy went down the street for a loaf of bread or something. But when Lady says, 'My man's gone' . . . you can see the guy going down the street. His bags are packed and he ain't never coming back."

In reality, it was Billie who, by destroying herself, packed her bags and left, while Ella, now seventy-five, has gone on singing. ♦

I hate jogging,
I hate push-ups,
I hate sit-ups...



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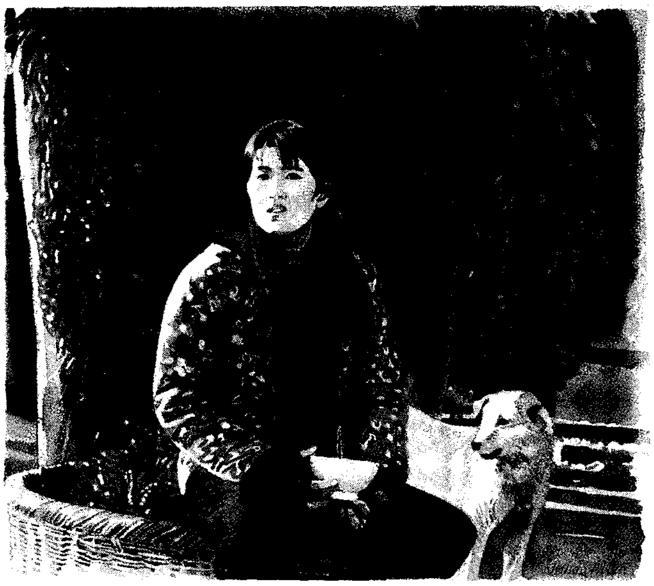

Revenge of the wife: Gong Li in "The Story of Qiu Ju."

JULIAN ALLEN

“INDECENT PROPOSAL” stars Woody Harrelson and Demi Moore as David and Diana Murphy, a young married couple living in California. He is an architect, she sells real estate, but times are hard: the film starts in a welter of voice-overs as they look back on better days. This is sad for them but great news for the audience, which gets to see Woody Harrelson trying to play a high-school kid by wearing a shaggy wig: it's one of those preposterous, sublimely wrong moments that make you glad to be a moviegoer. As I watched these early scenes, I began to tremble with anticipation: this could be the great bad film of our time, a host to all its plagues. The omens were certainly good: the director is Adrian Lyne, the man who brought us “Flashdance” and “9 ½ Weeks.” On the other hand, his last movie was “Jacob's Ladder”—confused, maybe, but also genuinely sombre and scary, and played without show by a haunted Tim Robbins. Was that just an aberration, or was Lyne really turning thoughtful? Would “Indecent Proposal” punch us awake with a study in sexual envy worthy of Polanski? No need to worry. From the moment when David and Diana sink to the kitchen floor and start to deconstruct their underwear, and the pulse of a love song throbs into life on the soundtrack, you know that Adrian Lyne is back in form. And there's more to come: a yacht that cruises into the sunset, straight from a Bacardi rum ad, and a Las Vegas casino where the dice are shot in fun-size close-up, tumbling in slow motion over the baize.

You may have gathered that “Indecent Proposal” is a teeny bit obsessed with money. Amy Holden Jones wrote the script, which is vaguely propelled by a belief that money can't buy you love; but the rest of the movie doesn't want to know. It adores the stuff, and can only come up with feeble suggestions for doing without it. “We never had much money,” Diana muses, looking back on their early years, “so David would show me architecture that moved him.” Now, there's a fun day out: have Woody Harrelson take you around and point out buildings that move him. All in all, it's a relief when the two of them go to Vegas on a whim and win twenty-five thousand dollars in a single night. They then make love on top of all the crackling bills, with the camera right there, shifting its position in excitement and rising to a sudden fade. (I think the movie comes before they do.) John Updike pulled a similar stunt in “Rabbit Is Rich,” where Harry Angstrom screwed his wife amid a hoard of gold Krugerrands, but there you heard the clink of self-delusion as Rabbit lost a coin and scrabbled around for it in panic.

No such ironies are permitted here. Instead, the film bundles together all its desires and smelts them into one gleaming character: a billionaire named John Gage, played by Robert Redford. Gage thinks that money *can* buy you love—or,

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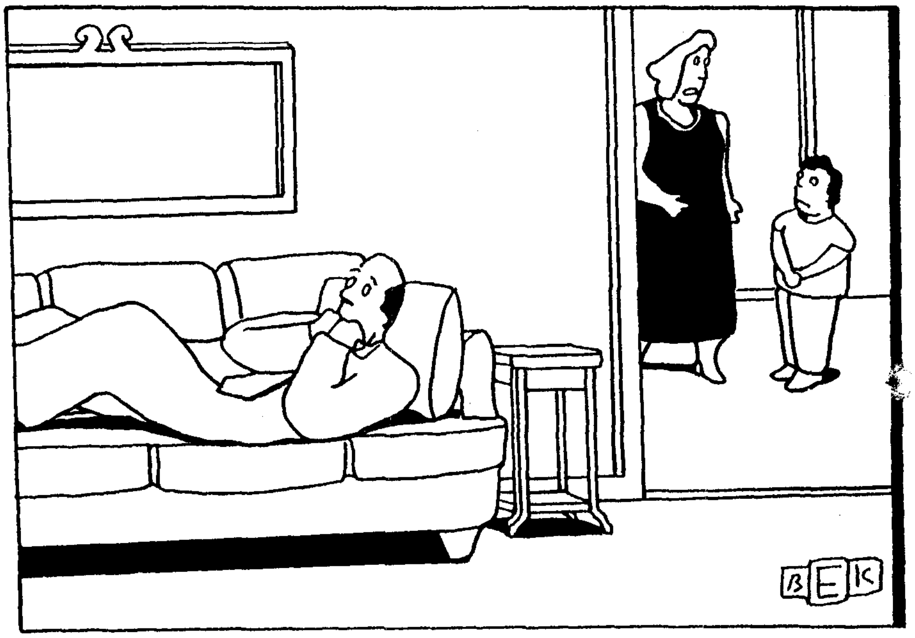
at any rate, the kind of sex that might, you know, sprout into love. So when he sees Diana in a Vegas boutique the wheels of lust start to grind, and before you can say junk bond he's asking her to kiss his dice and throw a seven. She wins, of course, whereupon he installs her and David—who have just lost all their cash—in an expensive suite. They look awed and pleased, although it's probably the nastiest hotel room ever seen on film: a steel-blue mess, rounded off with a delightful touch, at least in the print I saw—a microphone nodding from its boom at the top of the frame. Gage then makes his big offer: a million bucks for a night with Diana—no aftermath, no strings. "It's just my body," Diana explains. "It's not my mind." I was glad to have that cleared up, though it does raise an interesting question: How much would you pay for an evening with Demi Moore's mind?

I would happily give away the rest of the plot, except that you can guess it anyway. "Indecent Proposal" induces a strange power in the viewer, a glow of prophecy: you can see every kink in the plot minutes, even hours, before it happens. Looking back at my notes, I found a scribbled menu of predictions—"He'll buy the dress," "They're going to lose," and the eerily specific "He'll find the copter taking off as he arrives"—each of them followed by a gratified "Yup." There's nothing wrong with movies that run true to form; you could easily guess how "Now, Voyager" would pan out, yet still warm to the pattern of its melodrama. In those days, the studios treated weepies like thrillers—in the pursuit of love, Bette Davis had to skirt all the obstacles that fell into her path. Demi Moore wins her man back, too, and, unlike Davis, she gets him all to herself, forever; but the manner of the victory is so sluggish, with long pauses sagging between the lines, that it hardly seems worth the bother.

The whole thing needs a leading man with snap and vim, instead of which it gets Woody Harrelson. Admittedly, it's an awful part, which calls for little more than unfocussed emoting, but then Woody trying to emote looks like anyone else trying to go to sleep. At one point, he has to give a lecture on the inspiring joys of architecture, rising to the contention that "even a brick wants to be something." He should know. Harrelson has long been crucial to "Cheers," which both mocks and somehow dignifies the dumb hick in him; this movie does the exact opposite, solemnly turning him into a total idiot, and could subtly dent your pleasure in the TV show from now on.

And what, you may ask, is Redford doing in all this? Doing a Robert Redford, that's what: a lot of shy smiling, a lot of looks that say, Hey, don't worry, things will work out fine. Whenever Demi Moore comes into view, he doesn't so much see her as glance in her direction, look away, then double take back to

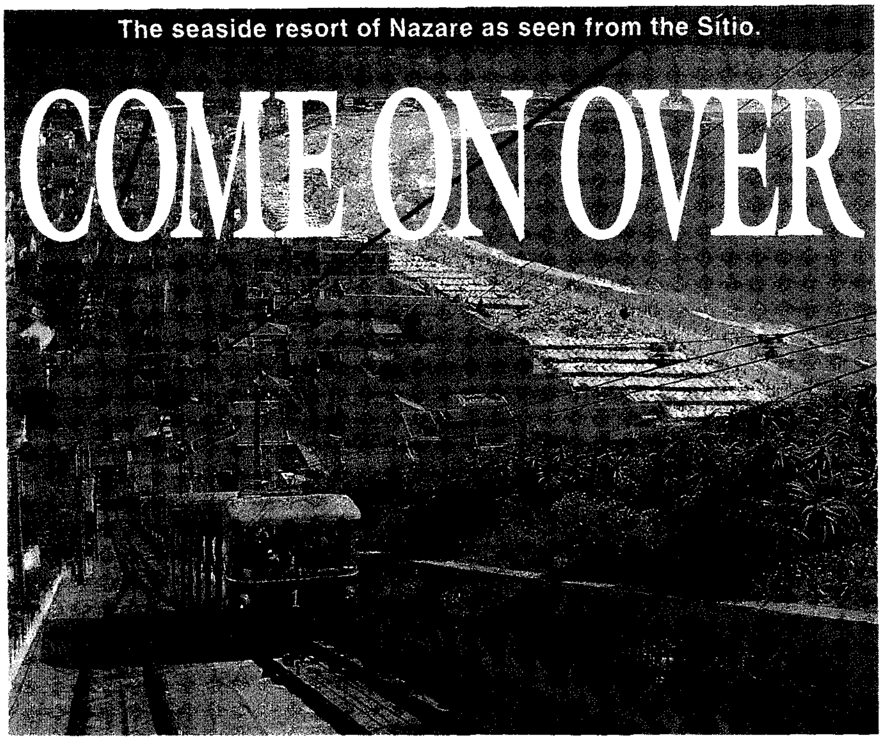


"You see, Thomas, there's a bully at Daddy's office."

her—and we're meant to like him for it, the old flirt. The fact that John Gage is a manipulating shyster with a soul made from credit cards appears not to have crossed Redford's mind—a shame, because if Redford ever decided to turn really sour we could be in for a fright. We've sensed that once, in "All the President's Men," where the moral grime of the story, as well as Dustin Hoffman's sneakiness, rubbed off on him. None of that here: Lyne treats him like a male model, fluffing his hair and making him stand around in long shot so that we get an eyeful of his (mostly disgusting) suits. And the closer the camera comes the softer the lighting gets, as if loath to admit how crinkled and potato-chippy—how interesting, in other words—the golden boy's face has become.

The worst scene in "Indecent Proposal"—and there are plenty of contenders—shows John Gage going to school. Diana has taken "a second job, teaching citizenship," and just as she is telling a classroom of immigrant students about the United States, one of them looks outside and sees Gage's Rolls-Royce. Their interest is stirred, rising to outright adulation as the man himself strolls in and starts to woo their teacher. He's a messiah, smelling of fresh money, and the movie can only sit back and agree: no messing around—if you've come looking for America, this is the man you need to be. In its flailing attempt to elevate the poor, a scene like this only slaps them down; you watch it openmouthed at the loftiness of the insult. "Indecent Proposal" needs to be seen, if only to furnish proof that a whole movie, and not just individual performers, can be vain, and that real vanity doesn't just look in the mirror: it can turn around and damage others. There are many good films about the rich, but this one is dangerously cheap.

Of course, it's only entertainment, except that you can't conceive of anyone's watching "Indecent Proposal" and feeling entertained. You stare at Gage and think, how can anyone have so much money and so little fun? How can a roomful of immigrants want to be like that? As for Demi Moore, she goes from looking wistful, glazed, and poor to looking wistful, glazed, and rich—out of the fridge and into the deep freeze. The only character turned on by Gage's offer is the Murphys' lawyer, Jeremy (Oliver Platt), who has one short, cynical scene that



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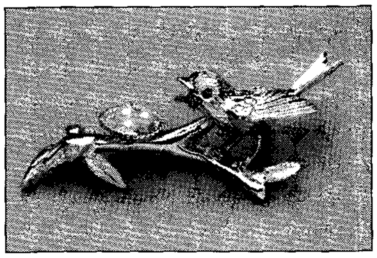
blows the movie apart. "How could you negotiate without me?" he yells at David, sniffing a big commission. You suddenly realize that "Indecent Proposal" could (and should) have been a comedy; it starts off with much the same plot as "Honeymoon in Vegas" and smothers it in mists and moodiness.

This gets unbearable once Lyne decides to pay homage. On board Gage's yacht, Diana comes up on deck and finds him standing there in a white suit, staring out over the water. We're meant to think of another Redford role—Gatsby, on the end of his dock. It's a horrible grab at cut-price longing and pathos, but worse is to come: Gage's mournful recollection of his ideal love, a girl glimpsed once on a train and never seen again. "That was thirty years ago. . . . And I don't think there's a day goes by when I don't think about her." Remind you of anything? Try the aging Bernstein in "Citizen Kane," remembering a girl in a white dress getting off a ferry in 1896: "I only saw her for one second and she didn't see me at all—but I'll bet a month hasn't gone by since that I haven't thought of that girl." Orson Welles called it the best thing in the movie, and said once, "If I were in Hell and they gave me a day off and said, 'What part of any movie you ever made do you want to see?,' I'd see that scene." How times change: when Redford speaks the lines, the audience giggles. Everything that "Indecent Proposal" touches, it sullies. It's trash without zest, keeping a poker face when there's nothing to be serious about: a guided tour to all that has gone lumpy in American cinema over recent years. As for the sex, you can see most of it in the trailer. The kitsch extravaganza that I'd been hoping for just lay down and died.

"The Story of Qiu Ju" is the latest work from Zhang Yimou, and by his standards it's a disappointment. Mind you, those standards are up in the clouds: his first feature was the hypnotic fable "Red Sorghum," and in 1990 came "Ju Dou." That was an unqualified masterpiece—a portrait of simmering sexual need, brushed across the screen in flamboyant colors. The movie world had seen nothing like it since the heyday of Michael Powell. The lovers' bafflement was a private affair, but it cast long shadows over the dire, dark ground of political repression. "Ju Dou" was nominated for an Oscar as Best Foreign Film, but the Chinese authorities—who didn't like the movie, and certainly didn't like the idea of anyone else's liking it—tried to withdraw it from competition. (The Academy should have given Zhang the award anyway, just to make trouble.)

The new film, on the other hand, went down very well with the authorities, and, in some creepy way, you can see why. Qiu Ju (Gong Li) is their Mr. Deeds, their Mr. Smith: she goes to "The Village," "The District," and, finally, "The City" to kick up a fuss and get right on her side. Her only complaint is that her husband was struck in the groin by the village elder. It's an absurd quest: you're torn between backing her and telling her to give it a break, just as the movie itself seems torn between comedy and despair. Zhang is a master of ritual—remember the lighting of the lamps in his last movie, "Raise the Red Lantern"—but here the pageantry has dwindled into rote: again and again, we listen to the slurping of noodles or watch Qiu Ju and her silent sister-in-law hitching a lift on the same old curve of country road.

Much of the movie was shot with a concealed camera while the actresses meandered through crowds, receiving Zhang's instructions via headsets hidden under hats and scarves. This sense of drift is a brave departure: it cocks a snook at the deliberate, driven beauty of the director's earlier work. It's true that "Raise the Red Lantern" almost seized up with symmetry and poise, and you can understand the need to break that style down, but with "The Story of Qiu Ju" Zhang has gone so far in the other direction—toward a rough aimlessness—that your attention starts to lag behind. He wants his moviemaking to get some dirt under its fingernails, and carefully elides anything that hints of climax: when the heroine goes to meet an official who might resolve the case, we see the buildup and the aftermath, not the event itself. But Zhang has a gift for amazement, and I found myself missing it, right up to the last moment. Then, suddenly, after a movie full of long shots, the camera comes up close, the heroine bares her head, and we see Gong Li—the leading lady in all Zhang's work—at her most distraught and most ravishing. Qiu Ju's stumbling, ordinary world has caved in; Zhang Yimou has found the crisis he needs, and the image stops your heart. ♦



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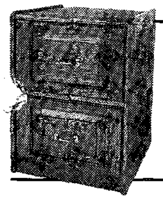

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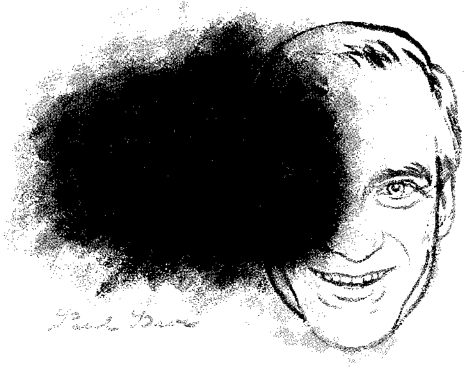
MOVABLE FEAST

BY JOHN LAHR

FROM its first beats, which are the whirr and pop of a flash camera revealing a woman sitting on a sofa in a series of strobe-lit freeze-frames, Stuart Greenman's "Silence, Cunning, Exile"—which owes its inspiration (but not its characters) to the life of the photographer Diane Arbus, who killed herself in 1971—announces its originality and commanding intelligence. (The play is being mounted in repertory until May 2nd, along with Han Ong's "The L.A. Plays," on Harvard's Hasty Pudding stage by the American Repertory Theatre.) The woman, we learn, is Greenman's central character—a photographer, named Suzie, who is captivated by the freakish. She holds up her slit and bleeding wrists to be photographed. Greenman bookends the play with this haunting image. In the intervening twenty years, Suzie progresses from a dutiful wife playing at normality to a genius photographer pursuing, to the point of madness, her obsession with the grotesque. "Hi, everybody," she says in the penultimate scene as she is about to give a lecture, whose first words turn out to be her last in the play. "I want to talk about taking pictures. The longer I do this, the more mysterious I find the results. Which is—" She never finishes the sentence. Her words, like her core, are incomplete and somehow strangled. But Greenman isn't. He concludes the play with Suzie's silhouette, projected behind her on a white scrim, fading out—lost, as she is, in the image. "The artistic life," said Oscar Wilde, whose gospel of art was also a destiny of self-destruction, "is a long and lovely suicide." In dramatizing the dynamics of Suzie's obsession, Greenman quite astonishingly captures the death of the spirit in pursuit of greatness.



Playwright Stuart Greenman invents a new kind of storytelling in "Silence, Cunning, Exile."

To trap Suzie's weird combination of wonder and absence, Greenman has invented his own spatial and literary idiom, which works entirely by indirection. This is a new kind of storytelling, in which the narrative method avoids what textbooks call an "insighting incident"—one that reveals the heroine's psychology by impelling her to act—and instead creates a tapestry of intimations, carrying the audience along on the hidden currents of passion and denial that swirl beneath the play's graceful narrative surface. It's a postmodern method, which in lesser hands might lean too heavily on presentation at the expense of penetration. But here the audience enters a series of shrewd quasi-Kienholz environments—elegantly organized, carefully controlled spaces in which the details at the edges of the stage pictures give a cumulative ironic weight to the anguish at their center. Suzie, an amalgam of the poetic and the predatory, whose contradictory nature is superbly portrayed by Stephanie Roth, is an emptiness trying to define herself by prying out the emptiness in others. She is cut off from herself; and sometimes she seeks to be literally penetrated by mutants. Freaks are the found objects—the detritus—of her adulthood. Suzie describes going back to a midget's room to photograph him. "When he took off his pants, there was a very faint smell, like vinegar," she says to a friend, whom she fixes with a melancholy gaze. "I asked him if we could go through his dresser drawers together, and I kept snapping pictures. I was . . . I was happy."

Greenman, a former actor, demonstrates by behavior, not by explanation. When Suzie charms a transvestite

PAUL DAVIS

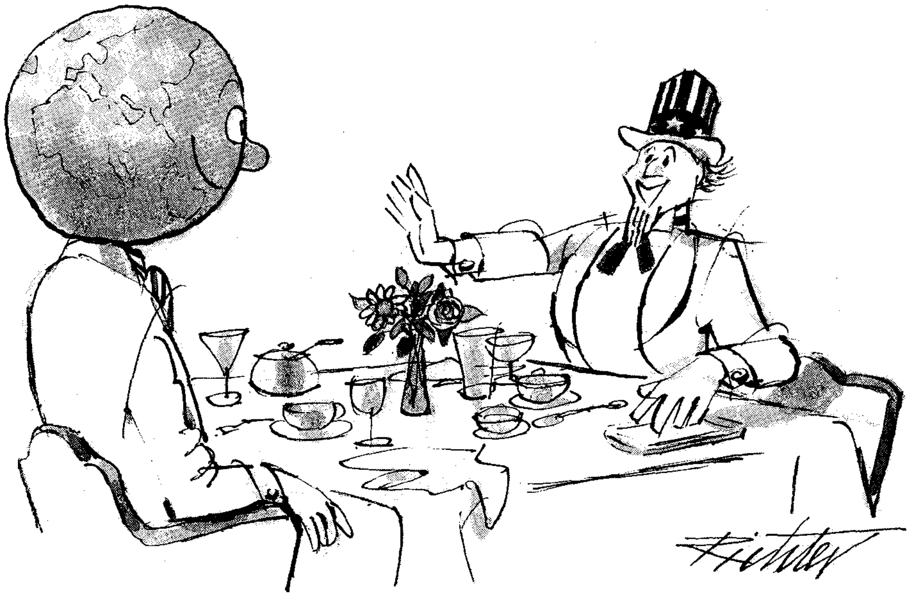
into showing her his scarred wrists from a botched suicide or tries to coax a prostitute into showing her a knife with which she once attempted murder, the play bears witness to the psychic transfer of the deadness inside her to the deadness in them. To create this skewed psychological terrain, Greenman speaks as much with space as with words. In the opening scene, Suzie sits upstage with her husband, Donald (Royal Miller), hymning the joys of motherhood and normalcy—allegiances that she will abandon in time—while one of their friends lies downstage bound in rope from head to foot. Suzie's journey into the grotesque is an escape not just from privilege but from her unanalyzable detachment. In the stage pictures, there is always some bit of oddness lurking in the corners and creating a sense of mystery and dislocation. A model poses for a fashion shot hiding her bruised eye from the camera. A pimp sleeps spread-eagled on a chair while his whore confesses to Suzie. At a raucous Village party where Suzie and her lesbian friend Kiki (turned skillfully by Leslie Beatty into a long-legged bit of brazenness) sit together on a sofa, a partying model passes out at their feet and stays face down for almost the entire scene, while the revelations of the other characters are played out around her. The model finally staggers to her feet, only to collapse into convulsions in the lap of a man beside Suzie as the scene fades out. In the last beat, Suzie puts on her sunglasses, and, according to the stage directions, stares "unreadably at the model's face." The chilling image dramatizes the absence of intimacy at the core of Suzie's nature. In moments like this, Greenman and his adroit director, Ron Daniels—someone who is at home in the murky waters of understatement and repression—manage to create a quiet but palpable sense of the monstrous.

"To be able to recognize a freak, you have to have some conception of the whole man," Flannery O'Connor says in "Mystery and Manners." But here Suzie (and, by implication, Arbus) is seeking not so much wholeness as an objectification of her disconnection. In the middle of a crisis, Suzie's self-absorption can be sensational. When, for instance, her longtime friend Frank reads a part of his bad novel which admits a love for Suzie, his embittered and drunken wife, Beryl (whose spoiling envy Candy Buckley pitches just right), denounces him as a "stupid oaf" and exits in a rage, only to return to berate Suzie:

BERYL: And you're not even sorry, are you? You sit there like . . . like some damn—
SUZIE: Martian?

In the face of calamity and Frank's obvious despair, Suzie starts discussing Cartier-Bresson and his theory of the "decisive moment." "So you always wear your camera, to be prepared," she says. "To sort of train yourself to see when the moment is coming. It's fantastic." The camera becomes her armor and her substitute for connection. Suzie increasingly puts herself in dangerous, ugly, and extreme situations in order to feel. She impersonates a bag lady and roots in garbage cans. She and Kiki take turns terrifying each other at home. She goes in search of the demonic. "Sometimes I put on my camera," she tells Kiki, who is talking about rape. "I want to go someplace terrifying. I want to follow someone off the subway. To a dark building. I put on my camera and I feel—" The deadness and deadliness of her subjects make Suzie feel alive. "You have the capacity to be seduced," her fierce mentor, the artist Isaac Miller (played by Alvin Epstein, with his usual brio), tells her. "There's nothing in this world more seductive." And she is seductive. "I tell them anything," she admits, and we feel the thrill of that seduction most powerfully as she coos "Oh, you're so pretty, it's so pretty, oh! Oh, please! Wait!" to a fat prostitute gorging on birthday cake and her compliments.This terrific scene, a dual seduction, ends with the whore (a brilliant and terrifying high-camp cameo by Remo Airaldi) taking Suzie's hand and thrusting it under her dress to demonstrate that she is a he. The moment is shocking, but not to Suzie. Both the camera and Suzie abhor a secret. She wants a larger charge. "Make me famous," the prostitute demands. Suzie is adamant: "Show me the knife." The whore starts to laugh—a laugh of recognition at meeting her match in exploitation.

"You cannibal!" shouts the now broken and forlorn Beryl when Suzie encounters her twenty years later and starts—then resists—taking her picture. "You son-of-a-bitching cannibal!" Greenman shrewdly positions this speech near the end of his play—as part, but not all, of his judgment. The events of the play are a series of Suzie's abdications in the name of art—the abandonment of friendship, family, decency, and, finally, life. If Suzie is a cannibal, it is herself she really devours. In bringing together barbarity and beauty, the absence of intimacy, and ambition in a finely wrought tableau, Greenman has fashioned a disturbing and, I think, profound metaphor of America. The author of three previous plays, he is new to me, but he emerges here as a cunning and fully formed talent.



"Hey, this is on me!"

IN "The L.A. Plays," the catchall title for the one-acts "In a Lonely Country" and "A Short List of Alternate Places," the precocious twenty-five-year-old playwright Han Ong, who calls himself "the perpetual immigrant," sketches in the shadowy life of Greg, an Asian-American street hustler, as he is alternately drawn to the "neon excitements" of the Los Angeles "action" and punished by the awful isolation of the place. In this world of open roads, bus stops, street corners, telephone booths, squalid rooms, and gorgeous moonlit skies, Greg endures the terrible struggle of being unseen in his own skin. Greg is Chinese, but in all his chance encounters people see him variously as Japanese, Native American—anything but what he actually is. It's Ong's ghoulish joke about American racism, but there's nothing funny about being a newcomer to the Land of Plenty when it won't deliver. Greg wants to be an actor, but there is no market for his talent, except for sex. "In a Lonely Country" begins with Greg's nightmare of racial rejection: an authoritarian offstage voice calls him to account for his looks and asks him to change them. In a series of brief, sharply etched exchanges, Ong charts Greg's addiction to hustling—a dependency that's as much psychological as economic. Greg finds in hustling the attention that won't otherwise be paid. He is needed; he is accepted as himself; he is, literally, taken in.

"I'm trying to write characters that have never been seen before," says Ong, who has written a dozen plays, and who began writing for himself in high-school drama class, because "there weren't any monologues I felt comfortable in." He adds, "I like writing about things that are thought of as low or looked down upon, because, at heart, I find people's taste suspect. Most Asian life is neutered by the unspoken cultural mandate to portray Asians as good, hardworking people. I'm not trying to do that." Greg, like his prototype Broos, whom Ong performed earlier this year in his "Corner Store Geography," which was one of the hits of the Public Theatre's "New Voices" series, is a hyphen looking for something and someone to connect to. "I'm interested in characters like Greg and Broos, who neither seek to be identified with blacks or Asians nor aspire to enter the white world. That in-betweenness is what interests me." Broos was a buoyant, campy character whom Ong incarnated with sinuous, angular gestures in a kind of jazz-fusion performance. Greg follows a more lugubrious, naturalistic blueprint; and Ong, who also performs this role, is not so comfortable in the part. "The L.A. Plays," for all the moody trenchance of the writing, are not matched with a comparable fluency in Steven Maler's directing. Still, what comes across the footlights is a powerful talent taking us into unknown territory. Ong, who came to the United States from Manila in 1984, claims that he has been thinking in English for only five years. (He dropped out of high school after his sophomore year and has earned an equivalency degree.) What he sees and hears in America is extraordinary. "I want theatre to do several contradictory things," he told me. "I want it to be pop and profound at the same time. I think I want it to be a confluence of many illegitimate and bastard forms, such as music videos, anthropological lists, dry news reportage, comic books, fashion shows. Why? I have a problem with authority figures. I have always resented being told what is not theatre, and I have been told these things aren't theatre. I disagree, and I want to prove these people wrong." Greg may not have a place to hang his hat, but Ong's is already in the ring. Blessed with a singular theatrical voice, he's at the beginning of what is already an exciting career.

AT the Public Theatre, Marga Gomez takes an hour and ten minutes, in "Memory Tricks," to tell us about Latino life in Washington Heights, and especially about her mother, a former dancer known locally as Margo the Exotic, who put the "n" in "narcissism." "This is how you hold a pocketbook. *Mírame, mírame!* And this is how you walk with a pocketbook," says Ms. Gomez, in sneakers and bluejeans, imitating her mother's swank deportment. "First, it's like a string is pulling you up. And everything is straight. And then you put one leg in front of the other. One leg at a time. Like you're gliding on a cloud. Like this. Glide, glide . . . and turn." Ms. Gomez, whose dark eyes alternate between twinkle and glare, also tells about one of her family's parties, where a cheek-pinching dancer asks her to make her a Cuba Libre, and she asks, "How do you make a Cuba Libre?" She recalls the answer: "Well, first you kill Castro." At the end of her droll, bittersweet show, after three curtain calls, Ms. Gomez came out to politely ask us to tell our friends if we had liked what we'd seen. Well, now you've been told. ♦

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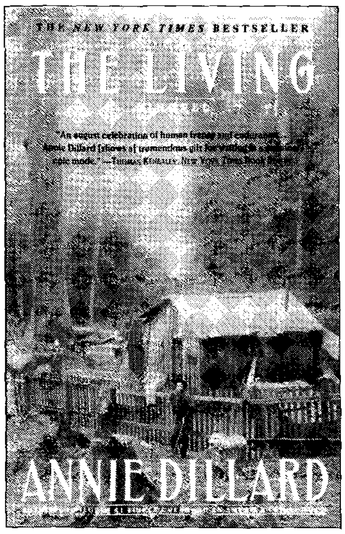

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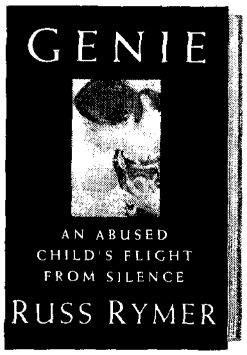
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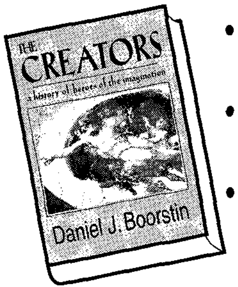
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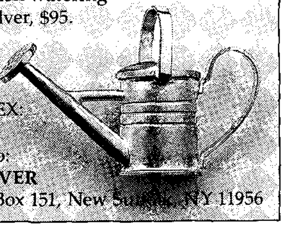
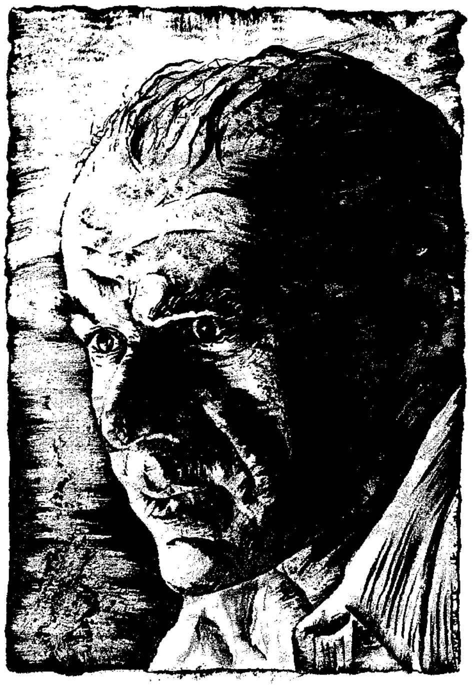


BOOKS

WHOSE SIDE WERE YOU ON?

BY MICHAEL MASSING

WHAT Émile Zola did for French anti-Semitism and Arthur Koestler did for Soviet totalitarianism, Kanan Makiya now intends to do for Arab nationalism. An Iraqi-born intellectual who has spent the last two decades in the West, Makiya, in "Cruelty and Silence: War, Tyranny, Uprising, and the Arab World" (Norton; $22.95), has issued a modern-day "J'Accuse," acidly criticizing Arab writers and scholars for condoning, supporting, and ultimately propping up the tyrannical regimes of the Middle East. Sweeping, impassioned, and perturbing, the book seems certain to set off a firefight among Arab intellectuals.



In his Persian Gulf post mortem, Kanan Makiya sounds at times like an Arab neoconservative, mugged by the realities of the Middle East.

"This book is a polemic," Makiya avows at the outset, one "in favor of calling things by their rightful names; of recognizing failure and of taking responsibility for it." Professing to have found "no pleasure in dissecting the words of Arab intellectuals," Makiya writes that it nonetheless had to be done. "Things have gone too far now and there is no turning back from the road that Saddam Husain himself first opened up when he entered Kuwait on August 2, 1990."

On that fateful day, Makiya was an obscure author living in London and writing under the name Samir al-Khalil. His only published book, "Republic of Fear," which was a scalding indictment of Saddam's Iraq, had taken three years to appear, and when it finally did, in 1989, it vanished in a flash. With the invasion of Kuwait, though, the book was reissued and became a best-seller; Makiya himself suddenly became a minor celebrity, appearing on "Nightline," in the *Times*, and in *The New York Review of Books*, all under his assumed name. On March 7, 1991, at a symposium organized by Harvard's Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Makiya went public—with a flourish. With allied forces having mopped up Iraqi troops in the Gulf, Makiya called on the United States to suspend its negotiations over a ceasefire, march on Baghdad, and oust Saddam. The reaction was fast and mostly furious—especially among Arab intellectuals, who accused Makiya of everything from sycophancy to apostasy.

"Cruelty and Silence" is his answer. In it Makiya (who was the subject of a Profile by Lawrence Weschler in this magazine last year) describes both the harrowing state of political violence in the Arab world today and the intellectuals' response. "Morally bankrupt," "knee-jerk," and "self-flagellating" are just some of his terms of abuse. Makiya is toughest on the most cosmopolitan, Westernized members of the intelligentsia. Though they were aware that "something had gone terribly wrong inside the Arab world," they nevertheless chose "not to speak out, especially not before a Western audience," he writes. Makiya maintains, with characteristic bravado, that it is not the "tyrannies, monarchies, and autocracies that wield the guns" but "the intellectuals who generate the ideas" whom "young Arabs must hold accountable for the moral collapse of their world."

"Cruelty and Silence" provides a sort of fools' gallery of Arab thinkers, their outlandish statements hung shamefully from their necks. Here, for instance, is Hisham Djaïet, a graduate of the Sorbonne, a knight of France's Legion of Honor, and probably Tunisia's best-known intellectual. In an interview with *L'Express* that appeared in February, 1991, Djaïet declared that "Iraq and Saddam Husain bring hope to the Arab world," and that, in "annexing Kuwait," Saddam "entered into the dynamics of history." For Makiya, those statements are tantamount to "celebrating violence." He writes that Djaïet, like Saddam, "is able to convert even the most abject defeat into proof of the indomitable spirit of Arabism."

Here, too, is Kamal Abu Deeb, a Syrian-born professor of comparative and Arabic literature at the University of London, a member of the editorial board of the theoretical journal *Mawaqif*, and an accomplished translator. After the Gulf War, Abu Deeb published a piece of poetic prose in which he proclaimed, "The nation may be the cave of our disillusionment, or the slaughterhouse of our sweet dreams, or the grave of our freedom and honor. . . . Still, we cannot but be with the nation." Rhetoric like this, with its mystical invocation of "the nation," is, for Makiya, "symptomatic of a fundamental cultural malaise."

Makiya reserves his greatest disdain for Edward Said. A professor of English and comparative literature at Columbia, a longtime member of the Palestine National Council (he resigned in 1991), and the author of such notable books as "Orientalism" and "The Question of Palestine," Said is probably the best-known Arab intellectual in the West. For Makiya, though, he personifies everything that is wrong with the Arab world. With his titles and his contacts, Makiya believes, Said is in an ideal position to speak out about oppression in the Middle East. But, Makiya maintains, he has remained mute.

As evidence, Makiya offers excerpts from Said's writings during the Gulf crisis. In an article that appeared in the British *Independent* on August 12, 1990—ten days after the invasion—Said "had nothing to say" about Saddam Hussein, Makiya writes; instead, he attacked Kuwait. ("Not a single [press] report," Said wrote, "has mentioned that the population of Kuwait is largely—indeed overwhelmingly—non-Kuwaiti, or that with few exceptions governments in the area have had little historical legitimacy.") In the *London Review of Books* Said cast doubt on reports that the Baathist regime had used poison gas on the Kurds. ("The claim that Iraq gassed its own citizens has often been repeated. At best, this is uncertain.") And in an article for *The Nation* Said seemed to blame the West for the invasion, claiming that Saddam "was almost invited into Kuwait." Makiya scoffs at this notion: "A moment's reflection should be enough to convince us that Saddam Husain did not ask anyone's permission when he invaded on August 2."

Makiya attacks Said's scholarship, too—especially "Orientalism" (1978), his pungent critique of Western writings on the East, a work that shaped Middle East studies in the nineteen-eighties. In it Said, quoting from writers like Marx, Flaubert, and Chateaubriand, argues that Western thinkers have for centuries subscribed to a highly artificial view of the East, based not on the realities of that world but on the West's relations to it as experienced through Biblical texts, the spice trade, colonialism, and so on. In Said's view, this set of perceptions—which he calls Orientalism—represents not only a case of intellectual myopia but a Western "style" for "dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient."

Though "Orientalism" makes few references to the contemporary Middle East, Makiya faults the book for feeding the current Arab appetite for a "deeply rooted populist politics of resentment" against the West. "The distortions [Said] analyzed came from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries," Makiya writes, "but these were marshaled by young Arab and 'pro-Arab' scholars into an intellectual-political agenda that was out of kilter with the real needs of Arabs who were living in a world characterized by rapidly escalating cruelty, not ever-increasing imperial domination."

Whether intellectuals should be held responsible for the uses made of their work is, of course, a difficult question. Presumably, Makiya would not charge Hegel with having spawned Marxism and thus Soviet Communism. Here, though—reluctant, perhaps, to weaken his case against Said—he dodges the matter entirely. At times, his critique seems driven by personal grievance. Makiya and Said have been exchanging barbs ever since the invasion. Among other things, Said has accused Makiya of being a "careerist" who, "aside from hysterical and only occasionally informative polemics against Saddam," seems "quite incapable of argument, scholarship, or rational exchange." "Cruelty and Silence" often reads like an exercise in payback.

Still, more than a personal dispute is at work. The Makiya-Said feud marks a deepening fissure in the generation of Arab intellectuals who emerged after the Six-Day War of 1967. In those years, the Palestinian cause dominated the Arab world, and both Said and Makiya (then in his late teens) took it up. But, while Said remained enmeshed in Palestinian politics, Makiya embarked on a different ideological path. Attending the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he became active in Trotskyist circles. In 1974, he moved to London to pursue his radical activities, and it was a comrade at a left-wing publishing house who persuaded him to write a book about the virulent nature of Iraqi nationalism.

Seeking to understand the excesses of the Baathist regime, Makiya soon found Marxist categories unequal to the task. Branching out, he began reading Plato, Hobbes, and Hannah Arendt. Meanwhile, the Iranian revolution—once a cradle of hope—was turning malevolent, and the Lebanese civil war was growing nastier. The Palestinian resistance fighters that Makiya had once admired were proving as thuggish as everyone else. The deeper he delved into Arab political culture, the more he came to believe that it, not America or Israel, was to blame for the region's woes. His manuscript, when it was finally completed, was so unconventional that his publisher rejected it. Had it not been for an interested editor at the University of California Press, "Republic of Fear" might never have known hard covers.

Even more than that earlier book, "Cruelty and Silence" bears the marks of Makiya's ideological journey. Mugged by the realities of the Middle East, he sounds at times like an Arab neoconservative. Running through his book is an undercurrent of preachiness and self-absorption common to the work of political pilgrims. Reading "Cruelty and Silence," one would never guess that many Arab intellectuals did speak out against Saddam Hussein, or that, for those who didn't, fear of retribution may have been an important motive. In much of the Arab world, an outspoken intellectual is a dead intellectual; Makiya himself had written under a pseudonym. His view of intellectuals and their influence seems, in any case, highly exaggerated. It's the Saddams of the Middle East, not the Saids, who command the Arab divisions.

In Makiya's marshalling of evidence, righteousness frequently wins out over rigor. Said's comments on the Gulf crisis, for example, were considerably more complex than Makiya lets on. In the *Nation* article cited by Makiya, Said, though unforgiving toward the United States, denounced Saddam's "monstrous aggressiveness" and his policy of "exterminism" as well. "Even if one grants that Kuwaitis were unpopular (does one have to be popular not to be exterminated?) and even if Iraq claims to champion Palestine in standing up to Israel and the United States," Said writes, "surely the very idea that nations should be obliterated along the way is a murderous proposition." Similarly, in a much discussed Op-Ed piece in the *Times*, Said lashed out at the "remorseless Arab propensity to violence and extremism." He asserts that "no Arab president or king is accountable to his people; this is just as true of Saddam Hussein as of the others. The bureaucracies and the secret police rule more or less unchallenged, although they are universally hated and feared. Only some of this can be blamed on imperialism or Zionism." Makiya fails to mention such passages.

And yet, in a way, Makiya's zeal seems understandable: he is seeking to change the terms of debate in the Arab world. That world, he believes, faces ever escalating forms of violence; only by shaking people out of their lethargy can the continuing catastrophe be stopped. To that end, he offers in "Cruelty and Silence" a journey through the region's "landscapes of cruelty," and his descriptions help lift the book beyond the realm of name-calling. Each country in the region, Makiya makes clear, practices its own particular brand of barbarism. In Saudi Arabia, it's public flogging, amputation, and beheading; in Lebanon, car bombs, suicide bombers, and urban snipers. Syria distinguished itself by devastating a city (Hama, in 1982, at a cost of more than ten thousand lives); in Yemen, the President had several of his rivals gunned down at a Politburo meeting, setting off two weeks of street fighting that left thirteen thousand dead. Everywhere, meanwhile, Arab governments abuse and brutalize women, a "ubiquitous target" in the Middle East.

It is Iraq, though, that epitomizes for Makiya the state of Arab savagery, and he provides a unique inside look. The Gulf War helped to pry open this most tightly closed of societies, and its victims were suddenly given the chance to tell their stories. Eager to record them, Makiya (an active member of the international Iraqi opposition) returned to the land of his birth in November, 1991, for the first time in twenty-three years, and spent three weeks in Iraqi Kurdistan. There he heard one grim tale after another, and he recounts them here to terrifying effect.

Taimour, for instance, is a fifteen-year-old Kurdish boy whom Makiya interviews at an abandoned Army barracks in the mountains of Kurdistan. Three years earlier, Taimour relates, dozens of Iraqi government trucks came to his village to transport its population to a nearby military fort, and from there to a crowded prison. The men were weeded out and led away, never to be seen again. The women and children were crammed into trucks and driven all day through intense heat to southern Iraq, where they were ordered out of the vehicles and into large rectangular pits surrounded by soldiers with Kalashnikov rifles. Minutes later, the soldiers opened fire.

Miraculously, Taimour was only lightly wounded, and after the shooting was finished he cowered among the bodies, pretending to be dead. Around him lay the bodies of his mother, his three sisters, and three of his aunts. When the soldiers weren't looking, the boy jumped out and sprinted to an empty pit nearby, where he hid until the soldiers left.

Makiya heard many such stories during his stay in Iraq. From them, and from captured government documents, he was able to compile an account of Saddam's campaign of genocide against the Kurds in 1988. The *Anfal*, as the campaign was called, involved poison gas, firing squads, mass graves, the destruction of villages—tactics that, Makiya writes, were "refined in this century by the likes of Hitler and Pol Pot." Over all, he estimates, between a hundred thousand and a hundred and eighty-two thousand people perished in the campaign.

Thousands more died in the Shiite and Kurdish uprisings that broke out in Iraq at the end of the war. Hatreds and resentments that had festered during twenty years of dictatorship suddenly burst into the open, inciting an orgy of sectarian slaughter. According to Makiya, the rebellion in the south was touched off by a tank commander who, arriving in the city of Basra after the rout in Kuwait, positioned his tank in front of a giant mural of Saddam. Standing on the chassis, he denounced the dictator, then jumped inside and began blasting away. Soon other soldiers joined in, and guns were quickly handed out to an eager crowd, which stormed the Baath Party headquarters and other official sites. "The pattern for every government building was the same: kill every official you could get your hands on, loot everything inside, spread some kerosene around the building, light a match, and get the hell out of the place fast," Makiya writes. One local Baathist thug who had been responsible for the arrest of his own sister's teen-age son on charges of subversion "was crucified on the walls of the local *husainiyya* [prayer hall]. . . . Then his arms, legs, and head were chopped off, and the pieces left on top of the town rubbish dump until the smell became unbearable."

Saddam's counterattack, when it came, was more horrible still. Napalm, cluster bombs, and Scud missiles were dropped on the holy city of Najaf, south of Baghdad. Troops entering it used women and children as human shields. Civilians seeking to flee the nearby city of Karbala were told to leave by a certain road; helicopter gunships were then sent to strafe them. Children who would not give their parents' names to soldiers were doused with gasoline and set on fire.

The bloodletting in the north was no

less grisly. Inflamed mobs swarming into a security building in the city of Sulaimaniya set upon the officials inside. "Those who had survived the fighting were tried and executed on the spot by the people using iron saws and knives even as they screamed and sobbed," Makiya learned from one source. Poring over those lurid accounts, Makiya suffered something like a nervous breakdown. "I found the cumulative effect of the stories unbearable, deadening to all rationality, a threat even to my own sanity," he writes. Despite their enormity, though, these events received little attention in the Arab world. Makiya charges that "not one of the intellectuals . . . who fulminated against the West for getting itself involved over Kuwait wrote or spoke up in defense of a people that had finally gathered the courage to rise against the regime that had napalmed, gassed, tortured, and terrorized them for twenty-three years."

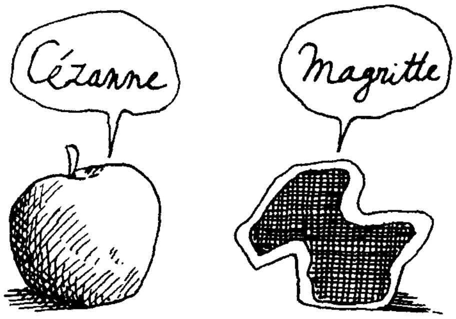
"If cruelty is individual, then silence is collective," Makiya writes, in a passage inspired by Primo Levi. "Cruelty and Silence" contains many echoes of Levi, and of Elie Wiesel and other survivors of the Holocaust. Some may find this presumptuous; after all, Makiya has never been in a death camp, or even a prison cell. Clearly, though, the Arab world has suffered its own cataclysm, and Makiya bears emotional witness to it. For better or worse, the discourse among Arab intellectuals will never be the same.

TURNING from Kanan Makiya to Michael Kelly is like going from Torquemada to Theroux. Where Makiya is intense, impassioned, and engaged, Kelly, in "Martyrs' Day: Chronicle of a Small War" (Random House; $23), is wry, cynical, and aloof. Kelly covered the Gulf War for *The New Republic*, among other publications, and his distinctive dispatches helped catapult him to a position at the *Times*, where he is now a Washington correspondent. Part travelogue and part war journal, "Martyrs' Day" is rare among Gulf War documents. The war unfolded in such short order, over so vast a terrain, that few correspondents glimpsed more than a sliver of the action, and the military's strict press controls narrowed the scope even further. Kelly, uncannily, always seemed to be in the right place at the right time. When American bombs began falling on Baghdad, he was at the Al-Rashid Hotel. When Saddam's missiles came raining down on Israel, he was in Tel Aviv. At the start of the ground war, he was in Saudi Arabia, eluding military checkpoints, and at the end he was in Kuwait City, joining in the celebrations. Kelly hitchhiked with Kurdish *peshmerga* guerrillas, dodged stones from Palestinian demonstrators, even accepted the surrender of Iraqi soldiers in a remote stretch of the Arabian Desert.

From these experiences Kelly has fashioned a vibrant account, reminiscent of Michael Herr's "Dispatches." Like that celebrated Vietnam chronicle, "Martyrs' Day" steers clear of political analysis, offering instead a highly impressionistic view of geopolitical upheaval. Unlike Herr, though, who had a single overriding theme—"War is Hell"—Kelly is oblique and given to understatement, a member of the "Isn't war strange?" school. He seems interested above all in evoking a mood, and he does it exquisitely.

Here, for instance, is Baghdad after the war: "It had become the ideal mob town, the perfect capital of a gangster nation. The new millionaires, Baathist bosses and government ministers and their merchant friends, tooled around the city in Mercedes-Benzes the color of *crème fraiche* and swaggered through the casinos tossing stacks of new money on the baccarat tables." The opulent marble conference center serving as the Emir of Kuwait's temporary abode had "creamy slabs of white, beige, pink, blue, and black, with rich Roquefortу veins running from panel to panel in perfect synchronized streaks," Kelly writes. "The look was so buttery-rich it seemed you could have scooped out a little spoonful of wall and spread it on a piece of bread, had there been any bread in the emir's city."

The most arresting section of "Martyrs' Day" concerns the infamous "roads of death," on which Iraqi soldiers retreating from Kuwait were pummelled by American warplanes and armored ground units. Kelly visited the roads about a week after the attack, and the wreckage was still there, "spread out in a dirty, smoking, occasionally bloody spume that stretched for miles and miles." His account is a ghoulish tour de force, full of viscera, excrement, and plasma. One soldier "had been bloated huge by gas and his skin had turned a Florida orange, so that his Tropicana belly puffed out like a balloon." Another had flesh that "drooped and sagged alarmingly, like wax warmed by a candle." Most appalling was a flatbed truck that had been bombed and roasted: "There were ten bodies in and about it, and all of them had been cooked to the point of carbonization, leaving shriveled, naked mummies; black, charcoaled husks with bared rictus grins and hands that had become claws." The morbid inventory, meticulously catalogued, runs on for ten pages.

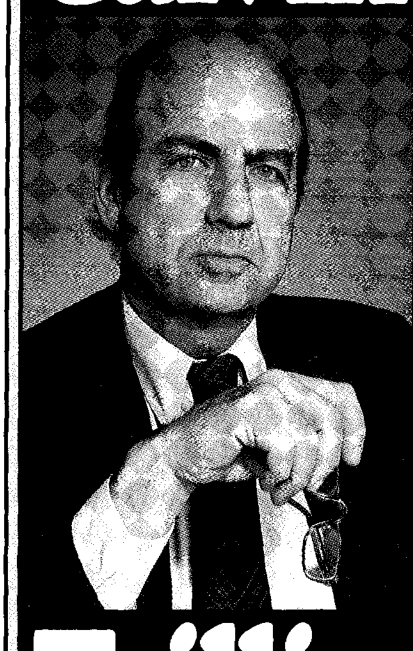


The point of the exercise, though, is not immediately clear. Kelly does not, for instance, raise questions about the extent of and justification for the slaughter, as some did at the time. Much of the killing took place after Saddam had announced he was withdrawing his forces from Kuwait; the Iraqis were so defenseless that attacking pilots later compared the experience to a turkey shoot. In Kelly's view, however, the casualty rate was "relatively low"—"certainly under a thousand, and probably only several hundred." A United States Army major whom he meets at the scene, and who seems to speak for him, says, "You have to remember, these guys did some terrible things back in Kuwait City." Foraging for documents among the charred bodies, the major observes, "I'm not a religious man. I'm really not. But when I contemplate all this, all the casualties we inflicted, and I think of the size of the enemy that we faced . . . and you look at our casualties—practically nothing!—it's hard not to feel there was some sort of divine intervention."

A highway strewn with twisted torsos and severed limbs seems an odd place to talk about divine intervention. Odd, too, is the energy that Kelly has brought to the task of describing the carnage. Had those bodies belonged to Americans rather than to Iraqis, would Kelly have written, as he does here, of gaping holes "from which black stuff had oozed and hardened," of innards "cooked into hard ebony coils and curves," of faces "not mildly green, like seawater, but a strong rich green, with some yellow in it, the color of a not completely ripe lime"?

In "Martyrs' Day" Kelly strives to be evenhanded, but his adjectives, lush and irrepressible, constantly betray him. In his hands, for instance, the crossing from Israel to Egypt becomes far more than a simple border hop. The customs shed on the Israeli side was "a clean white building of air conditioning and fluorescent light, bordered by judiciously watered grasses and flowers, set in the middle of the sand," he writes. "It was Israel in miniature, an isolated creation of modernity in an environment that was naturally and unremittingly hostile." The Israeli border agent, a "pleasant and efficient" woman, "pleasantly and efficiently" stamped his passport and ushered him through a gate to a blue bus waiting on the tarmac. It carried him a short distance down the road, depositing him at the Egyptian immigration building. Inside, he writes, "Egypt suffused me, getting in my eyes and nostrils and ears." The very air was different: "dustier, mustier, older, thick with scents that battled each other in the nose—the sharp-sour smoke of Turkish tobacco and the saccharine-flower miasma that lurks in places where perfume is easier to come by than showers." He adds, "Time, sped up to Western Standard by Israel, decelerated so abruptly that I was nearly nauseated, as if struck down with the horological bends. Everything was thick and slow and drowsing." Sitting on one end of a "butt-worn" wooden bench was a "white-whiskered man in a gray robe," reading a book whose cloth cover was "creased and darkened with palm grease." At the other end, a family of four sat "in sleepy silence, the squat, bulky mother, the thin, consumptive father, even the children all dragged half under the narcoleptic currents." Only after a lengthy wait was Kelly finally allowed into Egypt—the "unpromising land," as his chapter heading describes it.

It's a splendid scene, leaving little doubt about the writer's abundant gifts—or about his underlying sympathies. Whether "Martyrs' Day" is a case of calling things by their rightful names, or of "Orientalism," the reader will have to decide. ◆



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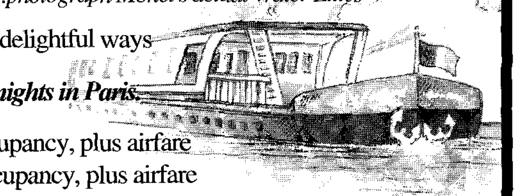

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BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Sacred Country
by Rose Tremain
(Atheneum; $21)

ROSE TREMAIN'S sixth novel opens in the county of Suffolk on February 15, 1952, as the Ward family gathers to observe a national moment of silence for the dead king. Standing in her father's snowy potato field, six-year-old Mary realizes that she is really a boy trapped in a girl's body. This epiphany marks the beginning of Mary's often harrowing and sometimes comical pilgrimage toward that place and time in which she can be her true self. But her family and neighbors live by coördinates only slightly less private and mysterious. Mary's little brother pictures his happiness as a ninety-degree angle: "When he swam, his body followed an imaginary horizontal line that pulled him on. Singing the Psalms, he sent his voice up an invisible vertical wire." The butcher's son dreams of escaping to Nashville, while the cricket-bat maker cherishes the notion that he was once a lutenist in the court of a Danish king. And Mary's grandfather is perpetually cheered by his own address—Holly House, Gresham Tears, Suffolk. Although there is a purity to Tremain's vision of these seductive interior landscapes, her characters inhabit them so fully that they seem impervious to ordinary life. This is a beautiful, knowing novel about isolation and loneliness, but at its center is an unnerving stillness, which one longs to see disturbed.

Saving St. Germ
by Carol Muske Dukes
(Viking; $21)

THE premise of this book is that either Esme, a scientist at the University of Greater California, is crazy or her daughter Ollie is. Esme's husband thinks that the girl is nuts. Esme doesn't. While she can see that Ollie does weird things, she can also see that they are often weirdly brilliant, particularly when Ollie picks up on an aspect of especially esoteric theory that Esme is working on. However, at that point Esme is being regarded as something of a case herself, though it will be clear to the reader that she, too, is weirdly brilliant. Like "Dear Digby," this poet's previous novel, "Saving St. Germ" presents a world where everything is a bit askew—which might be one way of characterizing sexism—and where science is a version of poetry. Hardly a sentence goes by without the snap of astonishing freshness and unexpected drollery. The tense ending is soured by a certain female chauvinism, but otherwise the book accomplishes just what art is supposed to accomplish: it makes the world new.

GENERAL

Balkan Ghosts: A Journey Through History
by Robert D. Kaplan
(St. Martin's; $22.95)

THIS book combines up-to-the-minute political reporting and literary travel writing. The author journeys around Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece, bearing with him volumes by earlier Western writers (Rebecca West, John Reed) who have described the scenery, the peoples, and the cultures of the Balkans. Like them, Kaplan finds that national histories and identities have survived centuries of occupation by Turks or Hapsburgs or Communists. All the Balkan peoples have created societies that at one time or another had considerable achievements to their credit, and Kaplan encounters charming, plausible individuals wherever he goes. Yet everyone is steeped in hatred: Croats tell him why they hate Serbs; Serbs tell him why they hate Croats or Albanians; Romanians explain why they hate Hungarians and other Romanians; Catholics and Orthodox Christians hate each other and still find room in their hearts to hate Muslims and Jews. The mixture of high culture and low politics may strike us as baffling, but very occasionally Kaplan meets someone (Milovan Djilas, for example) who can make sense of it. His prose is vivid, controlled, and sensitive; he has no solutions, only a hope that the violence will exhaust itself.

Conversations: The Autobiography of Surrealism
Translated from the French
by Mark Polizzotti
(Paragon House; $24.95)

A COLLECTION of interviews with André Breton that range over the whole tempestuous history of the Surrealists, from their breakaway from the Dada brotherhood, in 1924, to the time of their decline, after the Second World War. Breton discusses the importance to the Surrealist canon of automatic writing and other fundamentals, and gives a lively account of the scandals, brawls, hoaxes, and disorderly street meetings by which the Surrealists kept the Paris police on the qui vive in the twenties and thirties. By 1952, the cutoff date of these interviews, Breton had become a lone eminence of what he considered a major movement for thought reform and the spiritual improvement of the lot of humankind. In anger rather than in sorrow, he recalls the former comrades who deserted the cause, among them Salvador Dali, whose remark that train wrecks delighted him, provided that the first-class cars were spared, showed how far *he* had strayed from the fold.

The Worst of Times
by Patricia G. Miller
(HarperCollins; $22)

THE recollections in this volume come from the age of illegal abortions, which ended on January 22, 1973. Ms. Miller spoke with ordinary women—not "bad girls"—whose only crime was being fertile at a time when birth control was inaccessible to them. Whether trapped in bad marriages, unable to afford children, or simply unwed, they were largely shunned by doctors, who were unwilling to break the law. Thus emerged a nightmarish recourse: some hastily gathered cash, an unknown address, a possibly sterilized catheter, and (if one was lucky) the desired result. Particularly astounding is the revelation that abortions were routinely performed by people who had no business performing them: mechanics, chorus girls, beauticians. Just how much damage this underground activity wreaked is made clear through interviews with law-enforcement officials, with some of the abortionists themselves, with medical personnel who witnessed the aftereffects, and—perhaps most poignantly—with the now grown children of women who died in the process. ♦

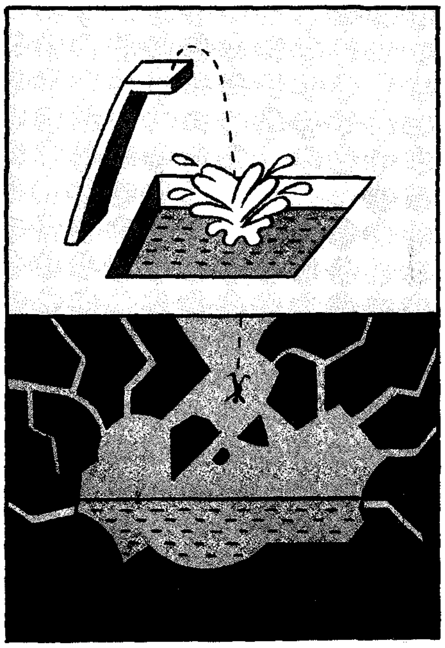
SHOUTS AND MURMURS

WATER WAR

BY JOHN McPHEE

In the long dry valleys of eastern Nevada, where rain-shadow rain falls in desert rations and the silence is so deep it rings, water has been in storage for about ten thousand years. These are the waterlogged basins, as they are known to science—the saturated valleys—but if you were to look out upon them that description is the last that would come to your mind. You would, in a glance, take in a million acres with nothing taller than the bunchgrass, the buffalo grass, the shad scale, the white and the black sage in tawny, desiccated boulevards between the high ranges. A daisy-wheel windmill, a cluster of cottonwoods—tens of miles apart—speak of settlement in some of the most austere and beautiful landscape between the oceans. It is a country held together by its concealed water, without which it would become exposed bedrock and dust. To the subsurface, the amount of fresh supply is essentially zero. What is down there is fossil water, resulting from a time when the climate was utterly different from the climate now, a time when alpine and continental ice to the north, east, and west caused so much rain that the Great Basin of Utah and Nevada held two freshwater lakes about the size of Lake Michigan and Lake Erie. Remains of that Pleistocene rainfall rest beneath the saturated valleys, prevent them from looking like Irq As-Subay, and emerge in small, sustaining quantities as spring creeks and seeps.

Las Vegas wants the water. Las Vegas is in Clark County, in southernmost Nevada, hundreds of miles from the saturated valleys. Distance is not a deterrent when you have the money. In Nevada, you can buy groundwater and, within the law, transport it from one basin to another, provided that the transfer does not impinge upon existing rights and is in the public interest. The public is in Las Vegas—marinopolis of pools and fountains. Las Vegas has less rain than some places in the Sahara, yet nearly a million people live there, and four thousand new residents are moving in each month. Around Las Vegas, well casings stand in the air like contemporary sculpture, and so much water has been mined from below that the surface of the earth has subsided six feet. While new wells are no longer permissible, Las Vegas desperately needs water for its lakes. They are not glacial lakes. If you want a lake in Las Vegas, you dig a hole and pour water into it. In one new subdivision are eight lakes. Las Vegas has twenty-two golf courses, at sixteen hundred gallons a divot. Green lawn runs down the median of the Strip. Here is the Wet 'N Wild park, there the new M-G-M water rides. Outside the Mirage, a stratovolcano is in a state of perpetual eruption. It erupts water.



Las Vegas has applied to drill the saturated valleys, remove the fossil water to a central place, and then pump it on to the south, in much the way that habitants in Quebec collect maple sap in tubes. Mountain sheep, antelope, deer, coyotes, eagles, badgers, bobcats will forever disappear as permanent springs go permanently dry. This has not escaped the notice of the environmental movement. In the eastern valleys, one regional motto is "Are You Hungry? Eat an Environmentalist," for the ranchers and the people they call "envirocrats" have been bitter enemies in a struggle over the use of federal land. Now, in the Water War, as it is known, the two groups are in the same trench, eating from the same can. The decision is not up to the legislature, or even the governor, but will be made by R. Michael Turnipseed, the state engineer. There is no lack of precedent. Los Angeles in an identical way has long since made dust of the Owens Valley. Water once headed for the Pacific is pumped to communities north of Denver through tunnels under the Continental Divide. Proposals exist to send water from Alaska in an undersea pipeline to California and in an overland pipeline to Texas. Las Vegas blandly claims that the resource is renewable, that Las Vegas will not be mining Nevada's Pleistocene water. All they have applied for is—annually—the equivalent of a one-acre pond eight hundred and sixty thousand feet deep. ◆

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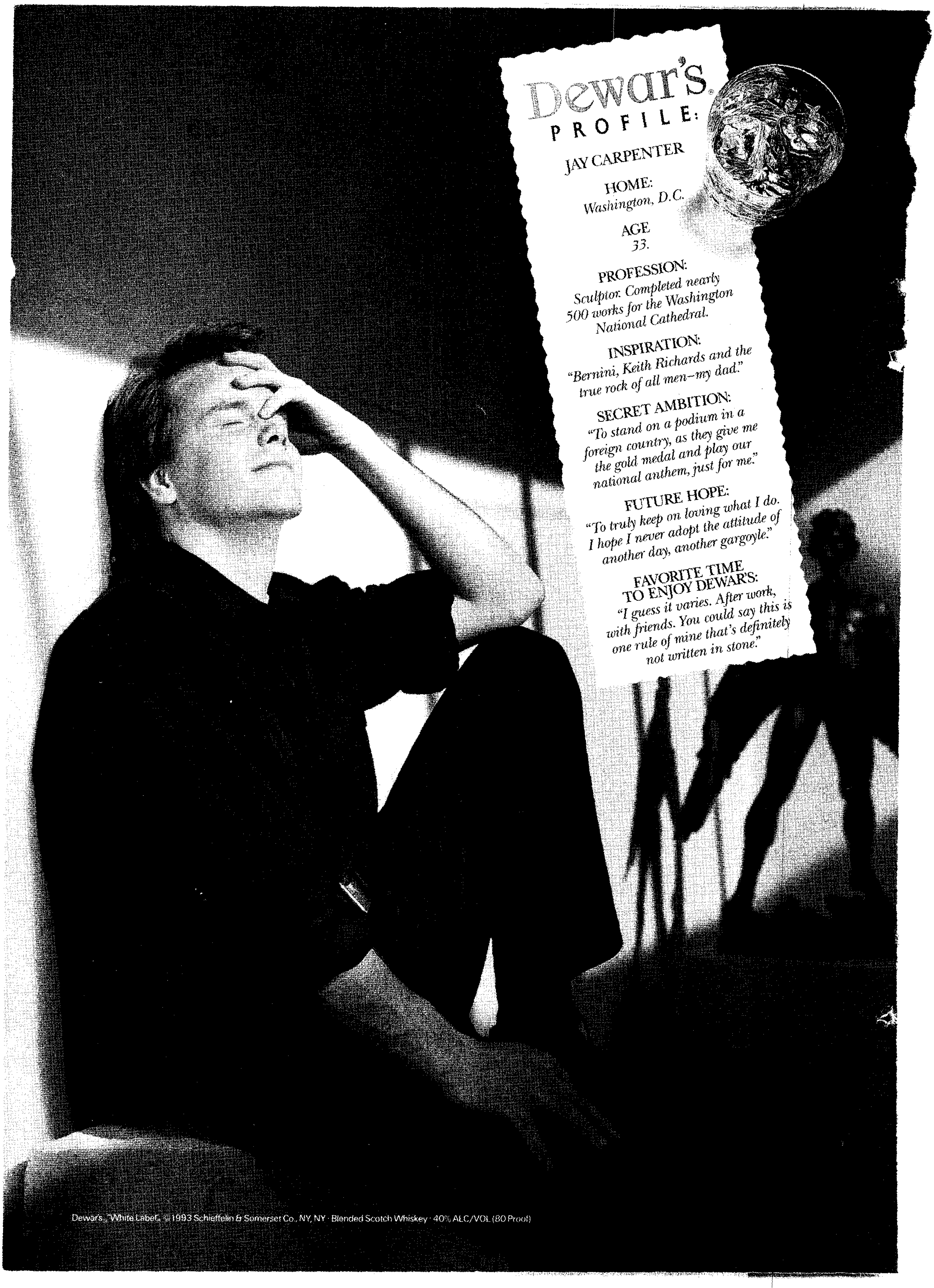

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